Parties agree to hold off on selling certain IPI items. PAGE 2
Atalig: Errors delay release of advance child tax credit. PAGE 3

Hafa Adai!

# Saipan Tribune

$1

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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# 95 new positive cases

By JOSHUA SANTOS
joshua_santos@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A total of 95 more individuals were identified and confirmed positive for COVID-19, bringing the CNMI's total to 787.

The Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. announced yesterday morning that the new cases were found through surveillance testing conducted on Nov. 26 and 27, and have since been isolated and are being monitored.

This follows a pattern of double-digit increases in the number of community cases of COVID-19 in the CNMI in the last few days, with 43 cases reported last Friday, 45 cases last Thursday, 32 cases last Wednesday and 98 cases just hours before that.

CHCC also reported that there are 355 active cases of COVID-19 right now and

See 95 on Page 4

## Man dies in quarantine

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A man has died while in quarantine at the Mariana Resort & Spa Saipan in Marpi yesterday and, although the case remains under investigation, it is believed to have been self-inflicted.

According to Department of Public Safety spokesperson Dre Pangelinan, a 22-year-old male who was a resident of Guam and

See MAN on Page 4

## More omicron cases pop up as world rushes to learn more

KIMBERLY B. ESMORES

THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP)—Cases of the omicron variant of the coronavirus popped up in countries on opposite sides of the world Sunday and many governments rushed to close their borders even as scientists cautioned that it's not clear if the new variant is more alarming than other versions of the virus.

The variant was identified days ago by researchers in South Africa, and much is still not known about it, including whether it is more contagious,

See OMICRON on Page 4

### GLOOMY WEATHER

A tropical disturbance passing south of the Marianas continues to bring heavy to moderate rainfall to the CNMI, causing flooding in areas experiencing drainage problems. Here, a part of Beach Road is flooded by torrential rain

KIMBERLY B. ESMORES

## AT A GLANCE

As of 7:02pm, Nov. 29, 2021

### VACCINATIONS IN THE CNMI

Eligible Population Fully Vaccinated: 85.9%

Days since last community transmission: 1

| Pfizer/BioNTech | |
|---|---|
| Initiated: | 33,057 |
| Fully Vaccinated: | 30,662 |
| **Moderna** | |
| Initiated: | 4,959 |
| Fully Vaccinated: | 4,771 |
| **Janssen** | |
| Fully vaccinated: | 987 |

| GUAM | OLD | NEW | TOTAL |
|---|---|---|---|
| Positive | 19,163 | 16 | 19,179 |
| Recovered | 17,163 | 102 | 17,265 |
| Active | 1,635 | 16 | 1,651 |
| Deaths | 263 | 0 | 263 |
| Cumulative Number of Persons Tested | | | 166,122 |

| SAIPAN | OLD | NEW | TOTAL |
|---|---|---|---|
| Positive | 692 | 95 | 787 |
| Traced via Travel Screening | 267 | 0 | 267 |
| Traced via Community Screening | 425 | 95 | 520 |
| Deaths | 3 | 0 | 3 |

*11/28=5; 11/27=3; 11/26=9

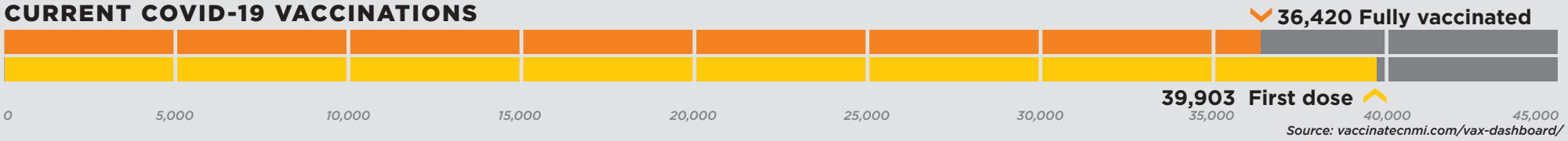
Source: Joint Information Center - Guam, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., https://www.vaccinatecnmi.com/vax-dashboard/

## COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

**LEGEND:**
- **Red:** Least safe
- **Orange**
- **Yellow**
- **Blue**
- **Green:** Safest

*Source: Office of the Governor*

### CURRENT COVID-19 VACCINATIONS

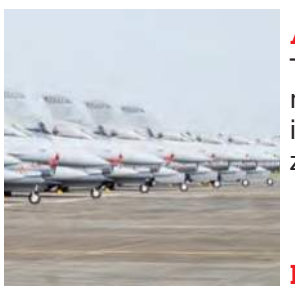



Source: vaccinatecnmi.com/vax-dashboard/

## INSIDE

**BUSINESS**
The World Health Organization urges countries not to impose flight bans on African nations.

PAGE 11



**ASIA**
Taiwan said 27 Chinese aircraft entered its air defense buffer zone on Sunday.

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**OVERDRIVE**
What's your car worth? Honda, Lexus take home JD Power Residual Value Award, again.

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SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

# Local

## IN RELATION TO THE AUCTION OF IPI ASSETS

# Parties agree to hold off on selling certain products

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
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REPORTER

The parties involved in the auction of Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC assets, which is set to commence today, have agreed on a 30-day stay on assets belonging to Angel Playing Cards USA Inc., which include dealing shoes and playing cards.

Yesterday, Richard Miller, counsel to APC, Colin Thompson, counsel for USA Fanter Corp. Ltd., Stephen Nutting, counsel for IPI, and Tim Shepherd, the court-appointed receiver, all signed off on a stipulation agreeing to a 30-day stay on the sale of APC products that were supplied to IPI back in 2016.

Parties filed the stipulation yesterday afternoon, asking U.S. District Court for the CNMI Chief Judge Ramona Manglona to continue the hearing on APC's motion to preliminarily enjoin or prohibit the sale of their products at the court's earliest convenience.

Miller, who represents APC, initially asked the federal court to preliminary enjoin or prohibit the sale of its products by the court-appointed receiver.

The unfinished casino of Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC in Garapan.
KIMBERLY B. ESMORES

Miller said APC has supplied IPI Holdings Ltd. and its affiliates, including IPI, with electronic dealing shoes and playing cards since 2016, specifically the Super Angel Eye β or SAE β dealing shoes, and Angel playing cards

"The Super Angel Eye β or SAE β dealing shoes are sensitive electronic devices coded for each casino that uses them. The Angel playing cards have an invisible bar code that is customized to be acknowledged and read by SAE β shoes provided to Imperial Pacific," Miller said.

Miller argued that because a January 2020 shipment of 161,280 decks of playing cards has not been fully paid, IPI does not have title to those decks and therefore the receiver cannot sell them.

"The sale of its products on Nov. 30, will irreparably harm APC and run counter to the public interest. This intellectual property or 'IP' is closely guarded by APC, and IPI is contractually obligated not to disclose it to third parties," the lawyer said.

Miller said his client demonstrates a fair likelihood of success on the merits and agrees that if the court does not rule in their favor after deliberation on their case, then the receiver can include their products in the auction.

"The receiver can go forward with the Nov. 30 auction of other gaming equipment to satisfy the judgment in favor of USA Fanter, and APC's products can be included in subsequent monthly auctions if the court, after adequate time fully deliberating on the merits of APC's claims, determines that the receiver should sell them," Miller said.

According to a previous article on the *Saipan Tribune*, the first of six auctions of IPI's gaming equipment is still set for today, Nov. 30.

Today's auction will be the first of six auctions to sell off gaming equipment owned by the Saipan casino operator as receivers look to redeem more than $2 million owed under a U.S. District Court order.

# Magofna checks CUC compliance with security deposit regs

By JOSHUA SANTOS
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REPORTER

Rep. Corina L. Magofna (D-Saipan) wants to know if the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. is compliant with regulations related to crediting CUC ratepayers with interest on their security deposits.

In a Nov. 28 letter addressed to CUC executive director Gary P. Camacho that Magofna made available yesterday, she said the regulations outlined in the NMI Administrative Code and Commonwealth Code requires CUC to credit CUC ratepayers with interest on their security deposits.

When asked for comments, Camacho told *Saipan Tribune* that he and CUC are looking into the matter, and will respond and provide an update accordingly. Camacho added that CUC always wants to ensure it meets all necessary regulations and requirements.

Magofna

In her letter to Camacho, Magofna, who is vice chair of the House of Representatives Committee on Ways and Means, she said some constituents have brought to her attention that some CUC ratepayers "have not been receiving credits for interests accrued to their security deposit accounts, both annually and/or upon disconnection of utilities, as required by regulation."

The law says that CUC is to maintain an account indicating customer name, date of security deposit, and amount of deposit. Effective Jan. 15 of each year, "each account shall be credited an amount equal to the average 'passbook' savings interest rate payable during the past year based on rates from at least three local [Federal Deposit Insurance Corp.] insured banks."

Another portion of the law requires the CUC comptroller to provide to CUC's board of directors "an annual report in January of each year [that] explicitly details the amounts of deposits received, interest rate to be paid for the previous year, and total account liabilities."

The law states that "[d]eposits shall be placed in an interest-earning trust fund to be established by the executive director. Funds collected shall not be used for any other purpose. All residential security deposit refunds shall be paid within 30 days after disconnection of utilities with earned interest."

Magofna also references in her letter the Findings of the CUC Security Deposit Fairness Act of 2007 and the Legislature's observation at that time: "[t]he CUC is a government-owned utility and should be sensitive to the needs of the community. Residents are struggling with increasing rates, surcharge fees, and an overall cost of living increase while their incomes are declining. Therefore, it is the duty of the CUC to hold these security deposits in a responsible and conscientious manner and to return such funds to residential customers with interest."

"Is CUC complying with the regulations referenced above, whether in its entirety or partially? Furthermore, please advise as to what steps CUC is taking to ensure that ratepayers are credited with interest on their security deposits," wrote Magofna.

She requested a response and clarification on the matter from CUC, as well as an up-to-date report "pursuant to this section of the regulation for the past three years including the current fiscal year" to be provided to her office within 10 days of receiving her letter.

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# Atalig: Errors delay release of advance child tax credit

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Finance Secretary David DLG Atalig disclosed last week that they experience a slight delay in their disbursements of the monthly advance or increased child tax credit because of a lot of errors.

Speaking at the governor's radio press briefing, Atalig said they had been informed by Bank of Guam, which is the government's bank, that Finance has to take an extra day or two to verify every account because BOG is imposing new fees if Finance's ACH (Automated Clearing House) transfers are inaccurate.

"We've been getting a lot of errors in people's bank accounts every week with every disbursement that we do with ACH," he said.

Last September, Finance distributed $882,000 in payments of the advance or increased tax credit through direct deposit and checks.

The CNMI is authorized to make monthly payments of the advance or increased child tax credit to eligible families amounting to $250 or $300, depending on the age of the child. The payments will be up to December 2021.

Atalig

Atalig said that in their review, they corrected over 100 accounts and that people are submitting and requesting every day for their advanced child tax credits and so they become new participants in this program. Atalig said all those verifications need to be done.

He, however, has been told that the disbursements for direct deposits were already out as they've already finalized the review.

Heading to the holiday season, he said they are doing their best to get out all these advance child tax credit checks and CNMI stimulus cards that are still pending.

"My staff are really working hard, trying to get these (checks/cards) out and to help our community," he said.

Mermaid Restaurant & Milk Tea is now a proud NMC ProaPerks partner. More information about their special promotion for ProaPerks card holders can be found at marianas.edu/proaperks.
NMC

# Mermaid Restaurant & Milk Tea is latest ProaPerks partner

Mermaid Restaurant & Milk Tea is the latest company to sign on as a Northern Marianas College ProaPerks Partner, joining many other businesses and organizations that provide exclusive discounts and benefits for NMC students, employees, and alumni.

All card-carrying members of the NMC ProaPerks program can now receive a free milk tea drink after purchasing 10 drinks at Mermaid Restaurant & Milk Tea, which is located at the Kada Dia Market in Chalan Kanoa.

NMC is in the introductory phase of rolling out the ProaPerks to alumni, students, and employees. For more information, visit marianas.edu/proaperks.

Companies and other interested organizations who would like to become part of the ProaPerks program and take advantage of the buying power of thousands of individuals that include Northern Marianas College alumni, students, and employees, can find more information by emailing proaperks@marianas.edu. ***(NMC)***

# Kilili: CHCC, 3 other health care providers will be getting $591,300 in ARPA funds for COVID losses

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) disclosed Thursday that the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. and three other health care providers in the CNMI are beginning to get a total of $591,388 in relief payments associated with their COVID-19 financial losses.

Sablan said in his e-kilili newsletter that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has announced that health care providers in rural and remote areas like the Marianas that applied for funding incurred due to pandemic-related financial losses are beginning to receive relief payments from the American Rescue Plan Act.

CHCC will be getting $572,872; Marianas Health Services, $14,049; Pacific Medical Center, $2,236; and Kagman Community Health Center, $2,231.

Sablan

Sablan said the payments are based on Medicare, Medicaid, and Children's Health Insurance Program claims for services to rural beneficiaries from Jan. 1, 2019 through Sept. 30, 2020.

He said the ARPA payments will help Marianas health providers keep their doors open, address workforce challenges, and make up for the lost revenues and increased expenses caused by the pandemic.

Sablan said funds may be used for salaries, supplied, equipment, and COVID-19 related expenses.

# PSS reaching out to parents on health protocols in bus stops

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Acting Education commissioner Eric Magofna said they have reached out to parents to remind bus riding students to adhere to COVID-19 protocols at bus stops, where the Public School System has no assigned staff.

Speaking at a recent House of Representatives Committee on Education meeting, Magofna said they make sure that the teachers inform the students about protocols and they're also reaching out to their Parent Teacher Student Associations to help inform parents because PSS has no staff assigned at bus stops to enforce the three W's or the health protocols. Three W's refers to wash your hands, watch your distance, and wear a face covering.

"So we really would like to work with our partners, most especially the parents, to make sure to educate their children that when they go to the bus stop, remember the social distancing, remember to wear your mask," he said.

Staffler

PSS made a presentation to provide the House Education Committee, chaired by Rep. Leila C. Staffler (D-Saipan), with updates on the planned resumption of in-person classes at PSS.

Schools will now be reopening based on their screening/testing schedule, and schools that are not scheduled for yesterday, Nov. 29, will continue with remote online learning until their scheduled testing date.

Magofna said hopefully all students would follow their advice, but then when they go on the bus all the protocols are going to be adhered too.

Babauta

It was Rep. Sheila J. Babauta (D-Saipan) who raised questions pertaining to the students who will be availing of bus services. Babauta asked what role does PSS play to ensure that the students at bus stops are abiding by the guidelines.

The lawmaker said she totally agrees with the fact that students are safe in schools where the guidelines are implemented. "How far does that extend to the bus services?" she asked.

While the buses are sanitized, that's not the case with bus stops, Babauta said.

"Who's responsible for the bus stops? I know that this comes up often in our discussions. But you know that's really where our students begin to congregate, right before heading to school," she said.

Babauta pointed out that she believes that anyone regardless of age will need constant reminding about the guidelines. However, she said, at the end of the day, discussion needs to be done on bus stop responsibilities.

Staffler, who is a former teacher, said that, from her experience, until the child gets into the bus itself, that's when that student becomes the responsibility of PSS.

"Because that's when PSS' responsibility begins. That was always what we learned in our training," Staffler said.

She agreed with Magofna about the need for community partners and parents to follow their children to the bus stop to help with the enforcement there.

Babauta said she believes that just for future conversation around the bus stop responsibilities, they welcome all partners because she does not think that everyone understands that role—that where PSS responsibilities begin and end in regards to the bus riders.

# 'Only way stop spread is practicing public health mitigation measures'

By JOSHUA SANTOS
joshua_santos@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. Esther L. Muña emphasized yesterday the importance of practicing public health mitigation measures to combat the spread of COVID-19,

During a virtual news briefing where she gave updates on he four unvaccinated individuals who are currently hospitalized due to COVID-19, and the CNMI health care system's capabilities to tend to current and future COVID-19-related hospitalizations, Muña said that CHCC is equipped to care for the four and any future COVID-19-related hospitalizations, but reminded that any increases in the number of CVID-19-related hospitalizations would have a toll on resources and staff.

"Our team is there, and they're very able and capable to treat the patients that we have right now…[but] we are at a level where it's tiring, it's exhausting— it's exhausting our healthcare system for sure—[and] it's going to cost us a lot of money because this is additional [working] time for our staff. ...We have very committed people, but they have families at home too," said Muña.

She added that CHCC is waiting for support from the Federal Emergency Management Agency in the next couple of days, with FEMA personnel going to be assigned to the CNMI to aid CHCC with the administering of monoclonal antibodies for COVID-19 treatment and providing support to any of CHCC's additional medical efforts.

There are currently four active COVID-19-related hospitalizations in the CNMI, with all four being unvaccinated and 50-plus years and older, according to yesterday. Muña said all four are experiencing severe symptoms and are receiving Intensive Care Unit-level care.

Muña said there are four rooms identified at CHCC's hospital for the care of COVID-19-related hospitalizations, and that any additional hospitalizations will be cared for at CHCC's Alternative Care Site.

In previous news briefings, a frequently asked question are if the positive cases of COVID-19 are linked to clusters. At this point in time, COVID-19 transmission is widespread, she said.

However, while reported cases continue to rise, it is through the CNMI's high vaccination rate and the community's continued practicing of public health mitigation measures that COVID-19-related hospitalizations are kept to, relative to the number of cases, a minimum, she added.

"The only way for us to stop it is [by] practicing the public health mitigation measures. ...But if you are not [practicing these measures], then [spread] is going to continue. I do want to say again that because of our vaccination rate and [because] we are pushing for boosters, we're seeing [fewer] hospitalizations. Yes, there is an increase in hospitalizations, but ...if you measure based on the [number] of positive cases, we are seeing a low number of hospitalizations," said Muña.

However, from CHCC's perspective as the CNMI's sole hospital, the numbers are high, said Muña. She added that CHCC's capabilities and the fact that it is the CNMI's sole hospital are factors taken into consideration when the CNMI's health leaders create and implement the CNMI's COVID-19 safety protocols.

"In the eyes of the health system [and] the hospital, it is high, because we are the only hospital in town, and we are working tirelessly to try to ensure that the patients are cared for. When we put in protocols, we always talk about how our health system has to be a factor in ensuring that we are able to handle this because it is going to be the health system that's going to be running the operations [and] seeing all these patients that are needing care," said Muña.

## OMICRON

*From Page 1*

more likely to cause serious illness or more able to evade the protection of vaccines. But many countries rushed to act, reflecting anxiety about anything that could prolong the pandemic that has killed more than 5 million people.

Israel decided to bar entry to foreigners, and Morocco said it would suspend all incoming flights for two weeks starting Monday—among the most drastic of a growing raft of travel curbs being imposed by nations around the world as they scrambled to slow the variant's spread. Scientists in several places—from Hong Kong to Europe to North America—have confirmed its presence. The Netherlands reported 13 omicron cases on Sunday, and both Canada and Australia each found two.

Noting that the variant has already been detected in many countries and that closing borders often has limited effect, the World Health Organization called for frontiers to remain open.

Dr. Francis Collins, director of the National Institutes of Health in the United States, meanwhile, emphasized that there is no data yet that suggests the new variant causes more serious illness than previous COVID-19 variants.

"I do think it's more contagious when you look at how rapidly it spread through multiple districts in South Africa. It has the earmarks therefore of being particularly likely to spread from one person to another. … What we don't know is whether it can compete with delta," Collins said on CNN's "State of the Union."

Collins echoed several experts in saying the news should make everyone redouble their efforts to use the tools the world already has, including vaccinations, booster shots and measures such as mask-wearing.

"I know, America, you're really tired about hearing those things, but the virus is not tired of us," Collins said.

The Dutch public health authority confirmed that 13 people who arrived from South Africa on Friday have so far tested positive for omicron. They were among 61 people who tested positive for the virus after arriving on the last two flights to Amsterdam's Schiphol airport before a flight ban was implemented. They were immediately put into isolation, most at a nearby hotel.

Canada's health minister says the country's first two cases of omicron were found in Ontario after two individuals who had recently traveled from Nigeria tested positive.

Authorities in Australia said two travelers who arrived in Sydney from Africa became the first in the country to test positive for the new variant. Arrivals from nine African countries are now required to quarantine in a hotel upon arrival. Two German states reported a total of three cases in returning travelers over the weekend.

Israel moved to ban entry by foreigners and mandate quarantine for all Israelis arriving from abroad.

And Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said Monday that Japan is considering stepping up border controls. Kishida told reporters that he planned to announce new measures in addition to the current 10-day quarantine requirement for travelers from South Africa and eight other nearby countries. Japan still has its border closed to foreign tourists from any country.

Morocco's Foreign Ministry tweeted Sunday that all incoming air travel to the North African country would be suspended to "preserve the achievements realized by Morocco in the fight against the pandemic, and to protect the health of citizens." Morocco has been at the forefront of vaccinations in Africa, and kept its borders closed for months in 2020 because of the pandemic.

## MAN

*From Page 1*

had arrived on Saipan last Nov. 23, died while in quarantine. Pangelinan neither confirmed nor denied when asked if it was true that the incident was self-inflicted, just saying that the case "is still being investigated."

As of 5:40pm press time yesterday, DPS said the case still remains under investigation and no further information was released as the case is pending notice of next of kin.

According to *Saipan Tribune* archives, the quarantine sites on Saipan include the former Mariana Resort, the Kanoa Resort, and Pacific Islands Club Saipan. In addition, Capital Hotel and Century Hotel located in Garapan have also been identified as temporary isolation sites.

The CNMI may see a drop in the number of quarantine sites soon with the recent changes to quarantine policies for domestic travelers that took effect last Nov. 19.

Effective Nov. 19, fully vaccinated incoming travelers with proof of a fully vaccinated household will no longer need to quarantine.

## 95

*From Page 1*

four COVID-19-related active hospitalizations, with all four being unvaccinated.

Of the 95 new cases, 50 were found through community-based testing and 45 through contact tracing. By vaccination status, of the 95, 45 were fully vaccinated, 38 were unvaccinated, seven were partially vaccinated, and five were ineligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine.

Since Oct. 28, there have been 496 new cases. Of the 496, 218 were found through contact tracing, 266 through community-based testing, and 12 through travel testing.

For testing efforts, a total of 1,127 tests were conducted on Nov. 26 and 27 comprising surveillance and travel testing.

Registering for community-based testing can be done at covidtesting.chcc.health. There is no code needed to register, and if no dates are showing then all slots have been filled. More dates will be announced, said CHCC in its news release.

CHCC said that its Communicable Disease Investigation/ Inspection team has already reached out to those who were in closest contact with the new cases, and added that "this effort will continue until all probable cases are identified and tested."

If you have concerns regarding possible exposure to a case, CHCC asks you to call its contact tracers no later than 9pm at 670-285-1942, 670-286-1710, or 670-286-1729.

If you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, which include fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, and new loss of taste or smell, CHCC asks you to see your health care provider or call the CHCC Tele-Triage hotline at 670-233-2067.

CONCERNED OVER SPIKE IN COVID-19 CASES ON SAIPAN

# Atalig recommends testing inbound passengers prior to entering Rota

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

File photo shows a beach on the island of Rota.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Concerned over the increasing number of COVID-19 cases on Saipan, Rota Mayor Efraim M. Atalig highly recommends immediately implementing a protocol of testing all inbound passengers from Saipan and Tinian 72 hours prior to boarding any flights or vessels entering Rota.

In a letter to Gov. Ralph DLG Torres last Friday, Atalig said this will prevent boarding of infected individuals who could infect the community of Rota.

"I stand ready to utilize any resources within the scope of my powers as mayor to assist with coordinating and planning to ensure the safety and security of the community of Rota," he said.

Ninety-five additional individuals have been confirmed positive for COVID-19 from surveillance testing on Friday, bringing the CNMI total to 787 cases since March 28, 2020.

Rota has had no COVID-19 cases yet. According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2020 Census results for the CNMI, there were 2,527 people on Rota in 2010 and 1,893 in 2020.

Atalig

As mayor of Rota, Atalig said, it is his fiduciary responsibility to protect the safety and well-being of the community.

Believing that the CNMI is "losing valuable time in prevention and protection implementations" against the pandemic, the mayor asked Torres for his immediate attention and action on this serious matter.

# Gathering restrictions to be discussed in light of rise in COVID-19 cases

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, and Gov. Ralph DLG Torres are set to talk about enhancing gathering restrictions and enforcements this week in light of the continued increase in the number of COVID-19 cases in the community.

According to CHCC CEO Esther Muna, CHCC, along with the task force and Office of the Governor, are in discussion whether further gathering restrictions and enforcement is needed for gatherings both large and small groups.

"We're working on some things right now at this time, but we have not made a decision. We're going to be discussing it further sometime this week with the governor and the task force. I think the concern is, if a restriction is approved, whatever restriction we decide on, it has to make sense. What we're seeing is [the spread of COVID] is happening in smaller congregations, smaller gatherings. Without enforcement, even a small gathering is a high risk," she said.

Meanwhile, when asked about whether Christmas caroling will be allowed this holiday season, Muna said the matter also falls under the gathering restriction and enforcement discussion to be had this week.

"We want to make sure that whatever prevention we put in place makes sense and, at the same time, is something that is necessary," she said.

Muna said further details will be announced to the community once a decision is made.

Currently, Muna said, because the Office of the Governor has yet to lift the Public Health Emergency for the CNMI, the Office of the Governor and the task force have the authority to impose further gathering restrictions and enforcement, especially given recent the rise in positive COVID-19 cases.

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Eli D. Cabrera
Administrator

Richard V. Salas
Director, DCRM

## NOTICE OF CRM PUBLIC HEARING

### KOBLERVILLE HOMESTEAD SUBDIVISION PERMIT APPLICATION NO. SMS-2001-X-213-A1

The Division of Coastal Resources Management (DCRM) will be holding a public hearing for the proposed additional lots of the Koblerville Homestead Subdivision project on Saipan.

The Department of Public Lands is proposing to increase the Koblerville Homestead Subdivision to 330 residential lots by decreasing the homestead lot size. The project includes installation of water, power, and sewer line connections, stormwater ponding basin, access roads, and sidewalks. The project site is situated on public land identified as Lot No. 048 I 01, measuring approximately 62 acres.

The public hearing for this project is scheduled on **Thursday, December 16, 2020, at 5:00PM, at the BECQ 2nd Floor Main Conference Room, Gualo Rai Center, Middle Road, Lower Gualo Rai, Saipan.**

Due to the ongoing threat of COVID-19 and to ensure the health and safety of all, virtual public participation is highly encouraged via video conferencing through Zoom link: hhtps://zoom.us/j (*Meeting ID: 6706648315*). Our Zoom meeting access code may change, please call the DCRM Permitting Office at (670) 664-8300 for connection assistance at least one-day prior to the public hearing date.

If you are unable to attend, written comments can be submitted to the DCRM Office, Suite 305, Gualo Rai Center, Middle Road, Gualo Rai, Saipan, or mailed to the Division of Coastal Resources Management, P.O. Box 501304, or sent by fax at 664-8315, or by email at ssablan@dcrm.gov.mp. The project files are open for review and comments during regular business hours from 7:30 A.M. – 4:30 P.M., Monday through Friday. All written and oral comments received by DCRM will be included as part of the permit application records and will be considered in any decisions concerning the proposed projects. Please contact the DCRM at 664-8300/1 if you have any questions or would like to learn more about the Koblerville Homestead Subdivision project.

/s/ Richard V. Salas
Director
Division of Coastal Resources Management

## Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

### INVITATION FOR BIDS
### CUC-IFB-22-003

## SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF BUCKET TRUCKS AND TRUCK CRANE

The Office of the Executive Director for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids for the supply and delivery of six bucket trucks and one 30ton truck crane for the CUC Power Distribution in Saipan, Tinian and Rota, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

***This project is funded from the United states Department of the Interior (USDOIA).***

Prospective Bidders must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $100.00 (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

**One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies** must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked *"CUC-IFB-22-003, Supply and Delivery of Bucket Trucks and Truck Crane)"* to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on December 6, 2021** at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time or post-marked before submission deadline. Late submissions and conditional offers will not be considered.

A Bid Guarantee of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification should be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). *Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.*

All bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid or supply under the contract. The IFB does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the bid under this request, or to procure or contract for goods. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

**Questions or requests for clarification** will be entertained only from registered Proponents and must be submitted in writing **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on November 12, 2021**, to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Lee Lieto, CUC Power Division Manager via email lee.lieto@cucgov.org, and Adrian Reyes, CUC Power Division Engineer at email adrian.reyes@cucgov.org and Marcela Tenorio at marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids for any reason and waive any defects in the said bids, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All bids submitted shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY BOYER SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

# Majesty hands out 188 free Thanksgiving meals

Members of the community come out to Majesty Chinese Restaurant during Thanksgiving last Thursday to avail themselves of free Thanksgiving meals that were distributed in front of the Chinese restaurant. Almost 200 meals were given out this year and last year.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

By JOSHUA SANTOS
joshua_santos@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Majesty Chinese Restaurant and Majesty Catering Services, in partnership with Full Belly, Full Hearts volunteers, served 188 hot and free meals for families last Thanksgiving Day, thanks in large part to Win Win Way Construction Holdings Ltd.'s Dr. Kan Hou-sek Jim and others for sponsoring Majesty's second-ever Thanksgiving meal distribution event.

In an email to *Saipan Tribune* on Saturday, Majesty also thanked its culinary team and kitchen staff, Yaong Corp. for donating frozen cases of chicken to supplement the Thanksgiving meals, Maricon Bricia-Allen of SketchMade for printing volunteer shirts, and Saipan Ice & Water for discounted water bottles.

Majesty said the meal distribution typically takes around 20 minutes, but last Thursday's event took around an hour and 30 minutes, with many community members visiting Majesty on foot or by car. Despite the high turnout, Majesty assured that last Thursday's distribution event complied with all COVID-19 safety guidelines.

An enforcer was assigned to oversee the placement of floor tape markers at six-feet intervals to maintain social distancing and ensured that everyone present wore face coverings at all times, said Majesty.

A separate drive-through line was created for those who chose not to step out of their cars to claim their meals, Majesty added.

Thursday's Thanksgiving meal distribution was part of Full Belly, Full Hearts' program to give out free meals and relief packages for people in need who were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Since the program's launch last year, Full Belly, Full Hearts has distributed 2,000 hot meals and around 700-plus grocery relief bags at distribution events held at Majesty.

Majesty's email quoted an unnamed Full Belly, Full Hearts representative who expressed the organization's gratitude to those who supported the Thanksgiving meal distribution and the organization's ongoing efforts.

"The generous donations of hot meals have provided a lifeline to those who are struggling with the economic impacts of the COVID-19 crisis. We thank Dr. Kan of Win Win Way and Mr. Alfred Ho of [Top Development Inc.] Group of Companies for supporting this initiative and for making the holidays a little brighter for people in need right here in our community," said the representative.

# SBBPC receives $5K donation from Palauan community

Clinton Ngiraked, president of the Palau Community Association, presents a donation to the Saipan-Belau Bai Project Committee.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Saipan-Belau Bai Project Committee, which is planning to build a *bai*, a traditional meeting house in Palau, recently received a donation of more than $5,000 from the Palauan Committee Association.

The donation was presented to the Saipan-Belau Bai Project Committee last Oct. 10, 2021, by association president Clinton Ngiraked and several other state representatives from the Republic of Belau.

"On behalf of the Saipan-Belau Bai Project Committee, I want to thank the PCA, as well as all the individuals, and the leaders of the state representatives for their contribution towards the Bai Project," said SBBPC chair Diego T. Benavente.

SBBPC charter member Jean Sablan said, "There were delays with the *bai* project such as the typhoons and then the pandemic, which further delayed fundraising activities. But still, we are focused on building the *bai*…not just for the Palauan community, but also for the people of the CNMI."

Cathy Skilang Sablan, another SBBPC member, stated, "The Bai Project began several years ago to nurture a better understanding of the Palauan islands' culture and language. We are about halfway to our goal of raising enough funds to finally start building the *bai*."

To date the SBBPC has raised more than $100,000 through fundraising efforts and community donations. Their goal is to reach $200,000 to cover the cost of the construction project. ***(PR)***

# GCA congratulations the November PGFC participants and winners

Grace Christian Academy administration, faculty, and staff would like congratulate their students who participated in the November (virtual) monthly qualifying competition of Primary Grades Forensic Conference for kindergarten to fifth grade.

Several of the GCA students won top honors in the various divisions.

The participants this month were as follows: Maia Ada, Quinn Bauer, Jordan Camacho, Reef Camacho, Breanna Lopez, Hans Ordas, Jacqueline Quitugua, Gwen Retardo, Caleb Shin, Chloe Shin, Simon Shinado, and Fiona Yu.

Due to the current situation, almost all of the events were pre-recorded video entries. The students are thankful for this opportunity and enjoyed recording their presentations/speeches.

The administration would also like to thank the teachers and parents who have assisted the students in the preparation of their pieces. They would especially thank the GCA-PGFC coordinators, Ruth Lopez and Miriam Dilse.

**K-2ND DIVISION**

**Impromptu Speaking**
1st place–Gwen Alexandra Retardo
2nd place–Jordan Camacho

**Chamorro/Carolinian Speaking**
1st place–Jacqueline Quitugua

**Reader's Forum C**
3rd place – Reef Camacho

**3RD-5TH DIVISION**
**Impromptu Speaking B**
1st place – Hans Ordas

**Reader's Forum A**
1st place – Chloe Hayul Shin
2nd place–Breanna May Lopez

**Declamation**
3rd place – Hans Ordas

**Humorous Interpretation**
1st place–Reanna May Lopez

GCA offers K-12 education and other learning opportunities. If you are interested to learn more about what GCA offers, contact Beth A. Nunez via email at bnunez.saipan@gca-nmi.com or call the GCA office at 322-3320. ***(PR)***

## COMMUNITY BRIEFS

### Entries sought for Marianas Christmas Village

The Marianas Visitors Authority is seeking 10 groups to build displays for the Marianas Christmas Village at Garapan Fishing Base, Saipan. Cash prizes up to $2,000 will be awarded for the top three displays. For more information or to register, contact the MVA Community Projects Division at (670) 664-3200 or communityprojects@mymarianas.com. ***(PR)***

### Free webinars on federal contracting

The Guam Procurement Technical Assistance Center is offering free live webinars this December. Webinars run from 10am to 11:30am and will be conducted via Zoom. Links to the live webinar and the webinar evaluation will be emailed to all registered attendees 15 minutes before the start of the webinar.

■ **Dec. 2, 2021-Teaming and Joint Ventures-**What are they and which is right for your business? The Guam PTAC will discuss the Federal regulations related to these arrangements and discuss ways to use these arrangements effectively.

■ **Dec. 9, 2021-Cybersecurity:Federal Contractor Responsibilitie**s: Department of Defense vendors need to protect themselves from cyber attacks. We will discuss DOD's current requirements as well as the upcoming Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification (CMMC), which has been re-designed and is now known as CMMC 2.0.

■ **Dec. 16, 2021-Procurement Integrated Enterprise Environment** - Department of Defense vendors use the Wide-Area Workflow module in the Procurement Integrated Enterprise Environment system to create, submit, and track their invoices. We will show you how to setup an account and submit an invoice so you get paid on time.

■ **Dec. 23, 2021-FAR Clauses Explained-**Confused by all the FAR clauses referenced in government solicitations? The Guam PTAC will demystify these Federal Acquisition Regulations. Join us as we explain many of the common FAR clauses found in Federal solicitations.

■ **Dec. 30, 2021-Government of Guam Procurement-**The Guam PTAC will explain Government of Guam Procurement, where to find opportunities, and how to submit bids.

To register visit www.guamptac.com. ***(PR)***

# 4th 'Small Business Sunday' drew 9 small businesses

By JOSHUA SANTOS
joshua_santos@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

"Small Business Sunday" hosted by Tyler's Gelatte Stone was back at the Sugar King Park in Garapan last Sunday, with nine local small businesses participating and live music provided by Larry and Kui Lee of Da Kine.

Tyler's owner Ben Babauta Jr. said that last Sunday's event was the fourth staging of the event and was the biggest so far.

A portion of the revenue made Sunday will be going toward the Northern Marianas Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence.

Participating vendors were Neni Girl Nails, Bonito Basula, Candle J Saipan, Hybrid Saipan, Chiku Chiku, Vivid Beauty, Pate Puffs & Pastries, Art Baloon 670, and Mix n' Macs By Jam. Holding fundraisers on Sunday was NMCADSV and Mount Carmel School.

In a brief interview, Babauta said that turnout was good, seeing "a lot of participation" from the event's visitors and vendors, and added that there were many pre-Christmas shopping deals. As for when the next "Small Business Sunday" will take place, Babauta said that further details are in the works.

Babauta thanked everyone for coming and Saipan Mayor David M. Apatang and his office for supporting the event and managing Sugar King Park.

Bonitu Basula's David and Lani Vinyard and Raymon Ilo share a photo at their stall Sunday during "Small Business Sunday" at the Sugar King Park in Garapan. JOSHUA SANTOS

Hybrid Shop's Lemmar Cadag, James Rabauliman, Liberty Rebauliman, and Raj Bravante share a photo at their stall during "Small Business Sunday" at the Sugar King Park in Garapan. JOSHUA SANTOS

Mount Carmel School's Victoria Deleon Guerrero poses at her stall during "Small Business Sunday" at the Sugar King Park in Garapan. Up for sale at her stall were $50 "Holiday Coupon booklets" that contained nearly 50 unique discounts at various CNMI businesses that add up to around $200 in savings. The booklets are on sale at the school's Business Office as well. JOSHUA SANTOS

Da Kine's Larry and Kui Lee provide live entertainment during "Small Business Sunday" at the Sugar King Park in Garapan. JOSHUA SANTOS

Candle J Saipan's Jiah Lee Iguel and her sons share a photo at their stall during "Small Business Sunday" at the Sugar King Park in Garapan. JOSHUA SANTOS

Pate Puff Pastries' Cyril Mojica poses at his stall during "Small Business Sunday" at the Sugar King Park in Garapan. On display and for sale at his stall were blueberry cheese pies, pumpkin cheese pies, and assorted cream puffs. JOSHUA SANTOS

Mix n' Macs By Jam's co-owners Leigh and Sai Gases share a photo at their stall during "Small Business Sunday" at the Sugar King Park in Garapan. JOSHUA SANTOS

Vivid Beauty's Ranasia Bocago, Victoria Bellas, and Taliyah Bocago share a photo at their stall during "Small Business Sunday" at the Sugar King Park in Garapan. JOSHUA SANTOS

Art Baloon 670's Yoko Okuma and Mikuri Takahashi share a photo at their stall last Sunday during the "Small Business Sunday" at the Sugar King Park in Garapan. JOSHUA SANTOS

# Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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## EDITORIAL

# Release the JFK records

Monday marked the 58th anniversary of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy on the streets of Dallas. It's time for the government to release all it has on that event.

According to the website of the National Archives, the government holds more than 5 million pages of records, photographs, motion pictures, sound recordings and artifacts—about 2,000 cubic feet of material. Just under 16,000 documents remain at least partially classified. Most of those were generated by the CIA and FBI, according to the think tank Just Security at the New York University School of Law. They include contemporaneous reports, interview notes, files of CIA officers who knew about accused assassin Lee Harvey Oswald, and interviews conducted by congressional investigators.

Last month, the White House announced that it is delaying the release of those remaining documents, citing delays from the pandemic. In a baffling twist perfectly suited for the JFK case, a 1,600-word White House memo quotes but does not name David Ferriero, the archivist of the United States, who said "making these decisions is a matter that requires a professional, scholarly, and orderly process; not decisions or releases made in haste."

Haste? Hardly. If 16,000 documents had been loaded onto a Saturn V rocket on the day the Warren Commission issued its report in 1964 and launched into the heavens, they would have been delivered 12.5 billion miles by now, well out of our solar system. To connect the word "haste" to those records is to write science fiction.

We doubt there are bombshells waiting in those documents. There may be revelations about suspicion around Oswald before the assassination, or even evidence that he had liaised with intelligence officers, a possibility that has long tantalized conspiracy theorists. But there likely isn't anything that will substantively change the tragic, confusing narrative as we know it.

But if the release of those records isn't important in setting the record straight for America, it's certainly important for Dallas.

Our city has lived with the stain of Kennedy's death long enough. It haunts our politics. It colors our reputation in the world. It draws the crazies to Dealey Plaza. Every president who has visited us since then has thought about that day, and every nut job with a theory on the magic bullet has wondered what the government is holding back.

Will releasing the final 16,000 documents end the conspiracies? No. Will it change that part of our city's past? Of course not. But it will at least close another chapter of the sordid tale. In our book, Washington could afford a little more haste in that regard.

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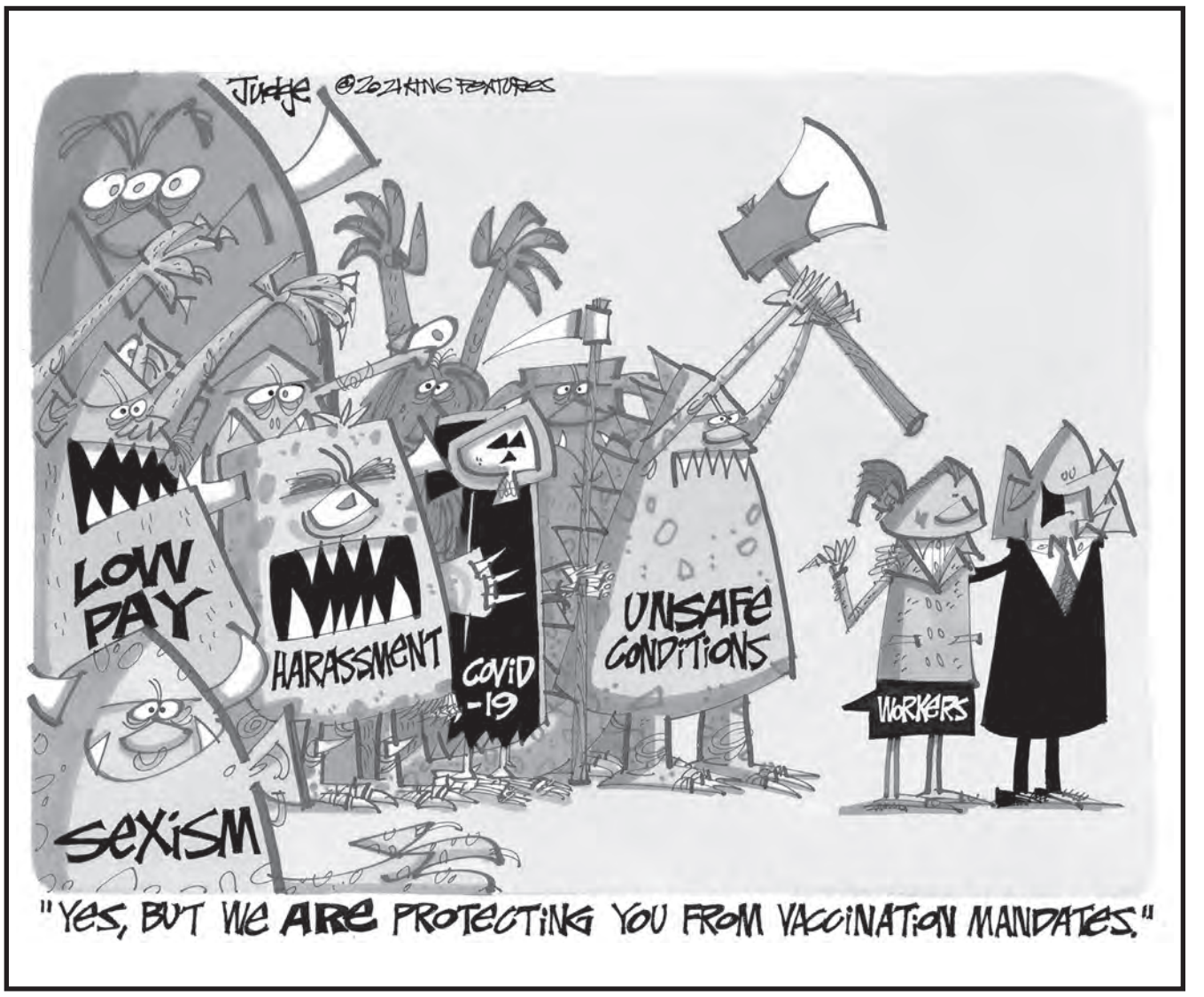



# The world asks China #WhereIsPengShuai? The answer will affect more than women's rights

**By TRUDY RUBIN**
The Philadelphia Inquirer

*Trudy Rubin is a columnist and editorial-board member for The Philadelphia Inquirer. Readers may write to her at: Philadelphia Inquirer, P.O. Box 8263, Philadelphia, Pa. 19101, or by email at trubin@phillynews.com.*

China disappeared star tennis player Peng Shuai because she accused a top leader of sexual assault, but her fate will affect the Olympics and China's relations with the world.

Chinese tennis player Peng Shuai reacts during a tennis match in Beijing on Oct. 6, 2009. When Peng disappeared from public view this month after accusing a senior Chinese politician of sexual assault, it caused an international uproar. But back in China, Peng is just one of several people, activists and accusers alike, who have been hustled out of view, charged with crimes or trolled and silenced online for speaking out about the harassment, violence and discrimination women face every day.

#WhereisPengShuai? has become the hashtag of the moment. The fate of one woman, Chinese tennis star Peng Shuai, has drawn more global attention to Beijing's abysmal human rights record than the repression of a million Uyghurs.

The reason goes beyond the compelling #MeToo drama of a Chinese sports star willing to do the unthinkable, by publicly accusing a former senior Communist Party leader of sexual assault. After she posted her allegation on Chinese social media, this three-time Olympian completely disappeared for three weeks, her post and name scrubbed from China's state-monitored internet as if she had ceased to exist.

Peng Shuai might have vanished with little fanfare if not for the forthright stand by the Women's Tennis Association (WTA), despite the risk of huge financial repercussions if the WTA is blocked from touring inside China. Global tennis stars such as Serena Williams and Naomi Osaka, have joined the chief executive of WTA Tour, Steve Simon, in demanding proof of Peng's safety and an investigation of her charges.

This stands in stark contrast to the cowardice of the president of The International Olympic Committee (IOC), Thomas Bach, who gave Beijing a pass after Chinese media released what looks like a hostage video of Peng surrounded by officials. Bach is apparently afraid the scandal will fuel calls for a boycott of the Beijing Winter Olympics in February.

Yet the fate of Peng has become a challenge not only to the Olympics, but to the backbone of companies and sports leagues dealing with the world's fastest rising power. China wants to control what the world can and can't say about its behavior. #WhereisPengShuai? has become a litmus test for #CanChinaControlTheWorld'sFreeSpeech?

Of course, the first issue is how to rescue Peng Shuai from the wrath of Chinese officials.

"It is the first time that a top leader in China is accused of sexual assault," says Teng Biao, a prominent Chinese human rights lawyer who is now a visiting professor at the University of Chicago. Peng's charge was launched against former Chinese vice premier Zhang Gaoli, who was also one of seven standing members of the Communist Party's Politburo. "Nobody dares accuse such a high-ranking official," Teng told me.

So it is not surprising Beijing wanted to "disappear" Peng. "The first step is to intimidate her, then silence her, and possibly confess [that her charges were false] on television," says lawyer Teng.

He knows whereof he speaks.

Years ago, Teng defended cases involving freedom of expression, the death penalty, Tibetans, and Uyghurs in China before he was driven into exile, as Beijing crushed human rights lawyers. He tells me "I myself was kidnapped and 'disappeared' three times. I was physically tortured and they threatened to send me to prison for 10 years and intimidated my family members."

"I believe the Chinese government has put Peng Shuai under extreme pressure. She must be cooperative. She can't talk about her experience."

Yet when IOC president Bach was permitted a half-hour video call with Peng, he accepted her claim that she was "safe and well" and invited her to lunch during the Olympics.

"This is clearly the IOC saying we're going to play by Bei-

*See CHINA on Next Page*

**EDITORIAL POLICY** Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

**LETTER TO THE EDITOR**

# Open letter to the members of the Democratic Party in the Commonwealth

I write to express two things: my disappointment in the party's leadership and to urge the direction of inclusion and participation of our members and those who support our vision and values.

As a long-time member of the CNMI Democratic Party, I express my disappointment in chairwoman Nola Hix and her vice chairman for their very unwelcoming and disrespectful treatment of me during the Central Executive Committee meeting with Lt. Gov. Palacios and Mayor Apatang on Oct. 24, 2021. My brother, former senator Herman R. Deleon Guerrero, who is a party leader and CEC member, requested that I attend the CEC meeting on his behalf to present and voice his position in ways the Democratic Party may win the 2022 gubernatorial general election in this important meeting.

The CEC was meeting with Lt. Gov. Arnold Palacios and Mayor David Apatang for the possibility of collaborating with them in the 2022 gubernatorial general election, that offers opportunity for both camps to win and prevail in their goal and aspiration in putting an end to corruption, restoring transparency, accountability, integrity and putting our government back in the hands of our people. As we know, Lt. Governor Palacios and Mayor Apatang have stepped away from the Republican Party's disappointing direction of privilege and exclusion.

I joined the meeting, in progress, as the CEC members were seated and listening to Lt. Gov. Palacios. Soon after taking my seat, CEC vice chairman Dan Quitugua approached me and said, "Get out." I was shocked and surprised so I asked, "Why?" He replied, "This is private meeting for CEC only," to which I said "I am CEC" and he said, "No, you are not CEC, you have to get out." Because Lt. Gov. Palacios was speaking, our exchange was hushed and in a whispering tone, without any argument or commotion. I remained quiet and said nothing. Dan Quitugua stepped away but then, a few seconds later, to my shock and surprise, from across the room, chairwoman Nola Hix, stood up and without any respect to Lt. Gov. Palacios, who was addressing the CEC, said, "Uncle Pete, you have to go out." I stood up and told her I am here as a proxy for my brother, Herman. She replied, "No proxy here. You have to get out." No one objected to my presence, including Lt. Gov. Palacios and Mayor Apatang. Upset and concerned over the situation, I told Nola Hix twice, "You are a bad leader," then walked out and left the place peacefully, causing no commotion or disruption.

Afterward, I was hoping that Nola Hix would call me to meet and discuss what happened. To my surprise and even greater disappointment, she sent WhatsApp messages to several persons about the CEC meeting where I was excluded. She wrote, "Uncle Pete Paduna attended our CEC meeting uninvited. He is neither a CEC member nor did any of our member contact me directly to allow him to attend as their proxy. I am upset that he attended our meeting and disrupted our meeting with his outburst and called me a 'bad leader' in front of our guests, Arnold/Dave. Unacceptable. Someone needs to put him in check and I would suggest your group disassociate. He is toxic. This is not his time."

Hix called me "toxic", and "not my time," etc. Unbelievable. Her messaging behind my back demonstrated how deceitful she is and her manners toward me on that day was disgraceful, unprofessional, disrespectful, and unwelcoming. Not necessarily that I was former speaker of the House of Representatives but as an elder at least, she should show sign of "respect and decency" toward me, and also, to my brother, former senator Herman R. Deleon Guerrero, who sent me to attend the meeting as his proxy. Unfortunately, chairwoman Nola Hix denied Herman representation in such an important meeting with Lt. Gov. Arnold Palacios and Mayor David Apatang.

As I stated, the Democratic Party is one of collaboration, consensus and inclusion. I'm sure it is obvious to anyone reading this that Lt. Gov. Palacios and Mayor Apatang are not members of the Democratic Party. They are independent candidates. However, they were at the meeting discussing the possibility of collaborating with us Democrats for reason stated herein. I did not ask to be there. I was there at the request of my brother Herman, a CEC member and long-time Democratic Party leader, to support the Palacios/Apatang proposal mentioned above. Because chairwoman Nola Hix told me to go out, I was there in that meeting for a very short time only. I was not disruptive; Nola was. Would we call someone who ejects a senior fellow party member who tells someone to "Get out" a good leader? I would describe her attitude as "an angry person with a mixed personality and misinformed."

Chairwoman Nola Hix on Oct. 24 (ironically United Nations Day in our history) was not a leader of welcome or inclusion at a meeting to consider the inclusion of those who may wish to join our cause for our Commonwealth.

No man or woman is an island. The Democratic Party is one built on collaboration, consensus and inclusion rather than exclusion and preference as with the other party. For these reasons, also, that I write to express my support for the inclusion and participation by our members and those who support our vision and values. I urge the CEC members of the Democratic Party to consider the path of inclusion and participation, especially with those in the Party who have experience and yet who simply are present to listen and support. As we know, the lesson in election history was the "Friends of Lang and Jesse" who, like today, were disenchanted members of the Republican Party and were frustrated with that Party's governor running for re-election. Were they registered Democrats? No, they were not. But they supported Froilan Tenorio and Jesse Borja as they were welcomed by our Party to receive their support. What happened as a result of that? Froilan Tenorio and Jesse Borja were elected governor and lieutenant governor, respectively. What would Lt. Gov. Palacios and Mayor Apatang think of a party leader who summarily ejects a senior party member before them?

Why did chairwoman Nola Hix call this CEC meeting? I know that it was to address Lt. Gov. Palacios' and Mayor Apatang's letter of Oct. 21, 2021, proposing the possibility of working together or to team up with them in the interest of "putting an end to corruption, restoring transparency, accountability and integrity, and to put our government back in the hands of our people." Who would not want to be part of that meeting in the Democratic Party? I do. Unfortunately, chairwoman Nola Hix denied me, and my brother Herman, the opportunity to say so and support the Party's efforts at such an important meeting with Lt. Gov. Palacios and Mayor Apatang. A lost opportunity, unfortunately.

As "Democrats," are we not supposed to take part in the "pros and cons" discussion on Palacios/Apatang's proposal for its approval or disapproval? We welcome transparency and open discourse, don't we? The Democratic Party is not just the CEC and we know that. But the issue is the lost opportunity on Oct. 24. We, as Democrats, are on the same boat as Lt. Gov. Palacios and Mayor Apatang, and that is to fight hard to put an end to corruption, restoring transparency, accountability, and integrity, and to put our government back in the hands of our people.

Regarding the selection and approval of the gubernatorial candidate for the Democratic Party, was it handled in a "fair and square" way amongst the other potential or prospective candidates who also submitted their intent but whose names were withheld from us Democrats by chairwoman Nola Hix and vice chairman Dan Quitugua? Some may wonder whether it was handled with exclusion or with transparency. Today, that no longer matters. They have selected and approved a person of their choice as the Democratic Party gubernatorial candidate for the 2022 general election. This candidate may be supported by those members who stayed with the party, but not because of chairwoman Nola Hix and vice chairman Dan Quitugua and the select few members of the CEC. The Democratic Party has no true leaders and stand on very shaky ground.

Under the questionable leadership of chairwoman Nola Hix, Dan Quitugua, and the selected few CEC members, many Democrats, including myself, are leaving the party to join and follow a winning team—the "Palacios/Apatang Camp."

I remain committed and will never let anyone deter me from the express desire and hope voiced by many of our people in the Commonwealth. It is the mission and vision that was adopted by the Democratic Party and shared openly and genuinely by Lt. Gov. Arnold Palacios and Mayor David Apatang: "to putting an end to corruption, restoring transparency, accountability, integrity, and to put our government back in the hands of our people" This is our people's expressed desire and hope to happen for the betterment of our people in the Commonwealth. Winning this mission, of which the Democratic Party and Palacios/Apatang are fighting for, is by collaboration, consensus and inclusion rather than exclusion. This possibility was seen, recognized, and offered by Lt. Gov. Palacios and Mayor Apatang to us Democrats on Oct. 24, 2021; however, it was railroaded, turned down, and was not entertained by chairwoman Nola Hix, Dan Quitugua and the select few CEC members, without examining or exploring its fullest potential in winning the 2022 gubernatorial general election, unfortunately.

**Pedro Rogolifoi Deleon Guerrero**
*Garapan, Saipan*

## CHINA

*From Page 8*

jing's rules, even if it flies in the face of Olympic ideals and common decency," says Sophie Richardson, Human Rights Watch's China director. "The IOC, which should be helping Peng Shuai, is helping her abusers."

Shame on the IOC and Bach!

Yet to the surprise of Chinese officials, the demand to know #WhereIsPengShuai? can't be disappeared as easily as she could.

The World Tennis Association won't let up. And unless she is quickly freed from censorship, and permitted to travel—and unless her charges are addressed—this will and should impact the Olympics.

It was bad enough to give the Olympics to a country that is involved in such massive human rights violations, against Uyghurs, Tibetans, the Hong Kong pro-democracy movement, and ordinary Chinese people. Add Peng's disappearance, and at minimum a diplomatic boycott of the games is called for—which President Joe Biden is considering. No matter what role Beijing forces Peng to play in coming weeks. (might Chinese leaders trot her out like a totem at the Olympics and force her to make a canned speech?) there must be a response.

However, the Peng Shuai moment should have repercussions beyond the Olympics.

The WTA's courage puts to shame other major companies or movie studios or sports organizations that have groveled after being chastised by Beijing. Who can forget when the NBA and some of the NBA's top stars slammed Houston Rockets general manager Daryl Morey's tweet in support of Hong Kong pro-democracy demonstrators? They caved to financial fear of a Chinese boycott of the NBA games and broadcasts.

Beijing's growing power has convinced its leaders that it can disappear or discipline its critics at home—and abroad—with no repercussions. This applies to companies or countries. (Example: When Australia asked for an investigation of COVID-19′s origins, Beijing cut off their agricultural exports.)

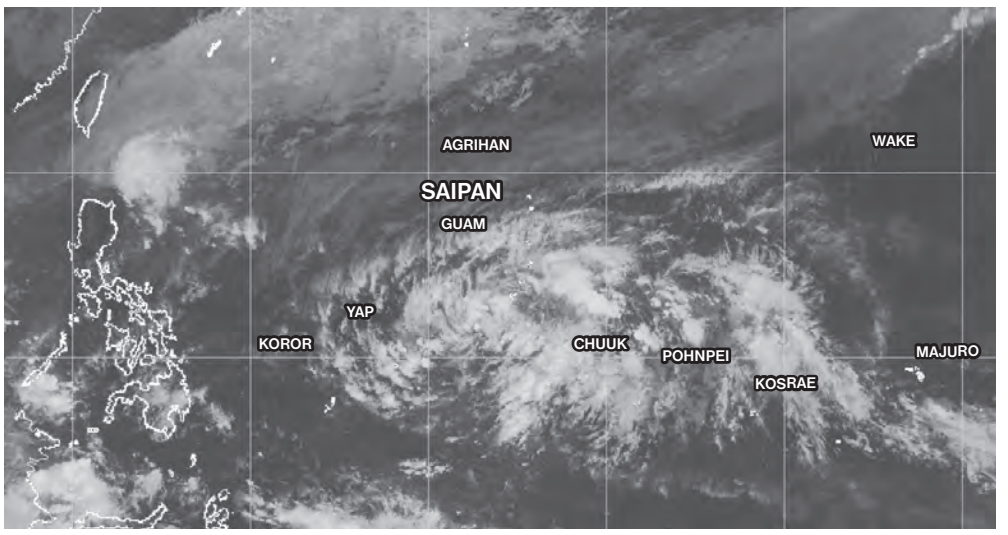
The more organizations and countries that kowtow, the more that will be demanded. Peng Shuai's plight reminds the world that there will be no end to such demands unless there is global pushback. Freeing Peng Shuai is only the first step.

# The Weather

## 5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

| TODAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mostly cloudy with scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms. | Mostly cloudy with scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms. | Partly cloudy with isolated showers. | Partly cloudy with a 10 percent chance of showers. | Partly cloudy with a 10 percent chance of showers. |
| 85° 76° | 87° 78° | 87° 78° | 87° 78° | 87° 78° |

## YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE




**PICTURE TIME: 9:05 AM, MONDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2021**

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A tropical disturbance, JTWC Invest 93W is loosely centered south-southwest of Guam near 11N143E. The north side of the system continues to deliver rounds of showers and gusty winds to the Marianas. Fresh to strong trade winds persist across the CNMI with mainly fresh winds across Guam. Satellite shows a swath of showers stretching from east of the Marianas to near Chuuk and an expansive cold front draped to the north near 20N. Choppy trade swell and building north swell is maintaining seas between 9 and 12 feet.

*Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/*

| MICRONESIA | | ▲ ▼ °F |
|---|---|---|
| Guam and Rota | Thunderstorms | 86° / 79° |
| Palau | Thunderstorms | 86° / 78° |
| Yap | Thunderstorms | 86° / 80° |
| Chuuk | Thunderstorms | 86° / 81° |
| Pohnpei | Thunderstorms | 85° / 77° |
| Kosrae | Thunderstorms | 85° / 77° |
| Majuro | Thunderstorms | 86° / 81° |

| DAY | SUNRISE | SUNSET |
|---|---|---|
| Today | 6:26 AM | 5:44 PM |
| Wednesday | 6:27 AM | 5:44 PM |
| Thursday | 6:27 AM | 5:44 PM |
| Friday | 6:28 AM | 5:45 PM |
| Saturday | 6:28 AM | 5:45 PM |

| DAY | MOONRISE | MOONSET | MOONRISE |
|---|---|---|---|
| Today | 2:01 AM | 2:26 PM | - |
| Wednesday | 2:56 AM | 3:08 PM | - |
| Thursday | 3:54 AM | 3:53 PM | - |
| Friday | 4:56 AM | 4:42 PM | - |
| Saturday | 6:02 AM | 5:38 PM | - |

| AROUND THE GLOBE | | ▲ ▼ °F |
|---|---|---|
| Auckland | Showers | 72° / 61° |
| Beijing | Partly Cloudy | 37° / 19° |
| Hong Kong | Partly Cloudy | 77° / 63° |
| Honolulu | Partly Cloudy | 83° / 74° |
| London | Partly Cloudy | 43° / 30° |
| Los Angeles | Partly Cloudy | 77° / 55° |
| Manila | Partly Cloudy | 88° / 79° |
| Melbourne | Showers | 86° / 68° |
| Miami | Partly Cloudy | 77° / 71° |
| New York | Partly Cloudy | 59° / 37° |
| Osaka | Showers | 55° / 45° |
| Paris | Showers | 46° / 43° |
| Busan | Partly Cloudy | 46° / 28° |
| Rome | Rain | 54° / 36° |
| Salem | Mostly Sunny | 71° / 52° |
| San Francisco | Sunny | 61° / 48° |
| Seoul | Partly Cloudy | 36° / 18° |
| Tokyo | Rain | 50° / 41° |
| Washington, DC | Partly Cloudy | 62° / 40° |

| TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY | | FEET |
|---|---|---|
| 3:41 AM | Low Tide | 1.26 |
| 9:43 AM | High Tide | 0.37 |
| 4:20 PM | Low Tide | 1.83 |
| 11:07 PM | High Tide | 0.28 |

## STOP THE SPREAD

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

■ Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.

■ Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.

■ Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.

■ Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.

■ Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.

■ Create a household plan of action, https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/checklisthousehold-ready.html

■ Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

**Continue good hand hygiene**

■ Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.

■ Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

**Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic**

■ Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:

• Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.

• Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

• Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

• Limiting visitors

CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For medical information about COVID-19, reach out to the COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers: 285-1672/1352. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis, call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561 These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30 pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, visit https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit www.governor.gov.mpand, follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html and at www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19.

**Rumor control**

During crises like this, oftentimes the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC.

*Source: Office of the Governor*

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## FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF NOVEMBER 12, 2021

### DEPARTURES

**SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| UA117 | 7:20am | 8:05am | 2, 4, 6 |
| UA117 | 9:50am | 10:35am | 1, 3, 5, 7 |

**GUAM-MANILA (MNL)**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| UA183 | 8:00pm | 9:50pm | Daily |

**SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| UA117/183 | 7:20am | 9:50pm | 2, 4, 6 via Guam |
| UA117/183 | 9:50am | 9:50pm | 1, 3, 5, 7 via Guam |

**SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 7C3406 | 3:10PM | 6:55PM | 6 |
| TW9308 | 3:20PM | 8:00PM | 4, 5 |
| OZ6243 | 4:00PM | 7:40PM | 6 |

### ARRIVALS

**GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| UA116 | 5:30am | 6:16am | 2, 4, 6 |
| UA174 | 8:00am | 8:46am | 1, 3, 5, 7 |

**MANILA (MNL)-GUAM**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| UA184 | 10:40pm | 4:30am+1 | 2, 5 |
| UA184 | 10:55pm | 4:45am+1 | 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 |

**MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| UA184/174 | 10:40pm | 6:16am+1 | 5 via Guam |
| UA184/174 | 10:40pm | 8:46am+1 | 2 via Guam |
| UA184/174 | 10:55pm | 6:16am+1 | 1, 3 via Guam |
| UA184/174 | 10:55pm | 8:46am+1 | 4, 6, 7 via Guam |

**INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 7C3405 | 8:30AM | 2:10PM | 6 |
| OZ6233 | 9:00AM | 2:30PM | 6 |
| TW9307 | 10:00AM | 2:20PM | 4, 5 |

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

## STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

### FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MAY 18, 2021

**SAIPAN TO ROTA**

| FLIGHT # | DEPARTURE | ARRIVAL | FREQUENCY |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1301 | 8:30AM | 9:00AM | Daily |
| 1302 | 11:00AM | 11:30AM | Daily |
| 1303 | 1:30PM | 2:00PM | Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri |
| 1304 | 3:30PM | 4:00PM | Daily |

**ROTA TO SAIPAN**

| FLIGHT # | DEPARTURE | ARRIVAL | FREQUENCY |
|---|---|---|---|
| 3101 | 9:30AM | 10:00AM | Daily |
| 3102 | 12:00AM | 12:30AM | Daily |
| 3103 | 1:30PM | 3:00PM | Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri |
| 3104 | 4:30PM | 5:00PM | Daily |

**ROTA TO GUAM**

| FLIGHT # | DEPARTURE | ARRIVAL | FREQUENCY |
|---|---|---|---|
| 3401 | 12:15 | 12:45 | Temporarily Unavailable |

**GUAM TO ROTA**

| FLIGHT # | DEPARTURE | ARRIVAL | FREQUENCY |
|---|---|---|---|
| 4301 | 13:00 | 13:30 | Temporarily Unavailable |

**SAIPAN TO TINIAN**

| FLIGHT # | DEPARTURE | ARRIVAL | FREQUENCY |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1201 | 7:00 | 7:15 | Temporarily Unavailable |
| 1202 | 8:00 | 8:15 | Daily |
| 1203 | 9:00 | 9:15 | Daily |
| 1204 | 10:00 | 10:15 | Daily |
| 1205 | 11:00 | 11:15 | Daily |
| 1206 | 12:00 | 12:15 | Temporarily Unavailable |
| 1207 | 13:00 | 13:15 | Temporarily Unavailable |
| 1208 | 14:00 | 14:15 | Daily |
| 1209 | 15:00 | 15:15 | Daily |
| 1210 | 16:00 | 16:15 | Daily |
| 1211 | 17:00 | 17:15 | Daily |
| 1212 | 17:00 | 17:15 | Temporarily Unavailable |

**TINIAN TO SAIPAN**

| FLIGHT # | DEPARTURE | ARRIVAL | FREQUENCY |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2101 | 7:30 | 7:45 | Temporarily Unavailable |
| 2102 | 8:30 | 8:45 | Daily |
| 2103 | 9:30 | 9:45 | Daily |
| 2104 | 10:30 | 10:45 | Daily |
| 2105 | 11:30 | 11:45 | Daily |
| 2106 | 12:30 | 12:45 | Temporarily Unavailable |
| 2107 | 13:30 | 13:45 | Temporarily Unavailable |
| 2108 | 14:30 | 14:45 | Daily |
| 2109 | 15:30 | 15:45 | Daily |
| 2110 | 16:30 | 16:45 | Daily |
| 2111 | 17:30 | 17:45 | Daily |
| 2112 | 18:30 | 18:45 | Temporarily Unavailable |

# Business

# WHO criticizes travel bans on southern African countries

People, some wearing face masks, walk in Regent Street, in London, Sunday, Nov. 28, 2021. AP

**JOHANNESBURG** (AP)—The World Health Organization on Sunday urged countries around the world not to impose flight bans on southern African nations due to concerns over the new omicron variant.

WHO's regional director for Africa, Matshidiso Moeti, called on countries to follow science and international health regulations in order to avoid using travel restrictions.

"Travel restrictions may play a role in slightly reducing the spread of COVID-19 but place a heavy burden on lives and livelihoods," Moeti said in a statement. "If restrictions are implemented, they should not be unnecessarily invasive or intrusive, and should be scientifically based, according to the International Health Regulations, which is a legally binding instrument of international law recognized by over 190 nations."

Moeti praised South Africa for following international health regulations and informing WHO as soon as its national laboratory identified the omicron variant.

"The speed and transparency of the South African and Botswana governments in informing the world of the new variant is to be commended," said Moeti. "WHO stands with African countries which had the courage to boldly share life-saving public health information, helping protect the world against the spread of COVID-19."

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa called the restrictions "completely unjustified."

"The prohibition of travel is not informed by science, nor will it be effective in preventing the spread of this variant," said in a speech Sunday evening. "The only thing the prohibition on travel will do is to further damage the economies of the affected countries, and undermine the ability to respond to, and also to recover from, the pandemic."

Cases of the omicron variant of the coronavirus popped up in countries on opposite sides of the world Sunday and many governments rushed to close their borders even as scientists cautioned that it's not clear if the new variant is more alarming than other versions of the virus.

While investigations continue into the omicron variant, WHO recommends that all countries "take a risk-based and scientific approach and put in place measures which can limit its possible spread."

Dr. Francis Collins, director of the National Institutes of Health in the United States, emphasized that there is no data yet that suggests the new variant causes more serious illness than previous COVID-19 variants.

"I do think it's more contagious, when you look at how rapidly it spread through multiple districts in South Africa," Collins said on CNN's "State of the Union."

Israel decided to bar entry to foreigners, and Morocco said it would suspend all incoming flights for two weeks starting Monday—among the most drastic of a growing raft of travel curbs being imposed as nations scrambled to slow the variant's spread. Scientists in several places—from Hong Kong to Europe—have confirmed its presence. The Netherlands reported 13 omicron cases on Sunday, and Australia found two.

The U.S. plans to ban travel from South Africa and seven other southern African countries starting Monday.

"With the omicron variant now detected in several regions of the world, putting in place travel bans that target Africa attacks global solidarity," said Moeti. "COVID-19 constantly exploits our divisions. We will only get the better of the virus if we work together for solutions."

WHO said it scaling up its support for genomic sequencing in Africa so sequencing laboratories have access to adequate human resources and testing reagents to work at full capacity. WHO also said is ready to offer additional help, reinforcing COVID-19 responses including surveillance, treatment, infection prevention and community engagement in southern African countries, it said.

## COVID-19 BRIEFS

### Morocco halts all incoming flights because of virus variant

**RABAT, Morocco** (AP)—Morocco is suspending all incoming air travel from around the world starting Monday for two weeks because of the rapid spread of the new omicron variant, the government's committee in charge of monitoring COVID-19 announced Sunday. The Foreign Ministry tweeted that the decision was taken to "preserve the achievements realized by Morocco in the fight against the pandemic, and to protect the health of citizens." It noted the spread of omicron in Africa and Europe. Morocco kept its borders closed for months in 2020 because of the pandemic, fearing that its health system wouldn't be able to manage the surges of patients seen in nearby Europe. The kingdom in North Africa has had among Africa's highest rates of confirmed infections but also is at the forefront of the continent's vaccination effort, with 66% of its population having received at least one dose.

### Dutch impose new tighter lockdown amid spiking infections

**AMSTERDAM** (AP)—The Netherlands moved into a tougher lockdown Sunday that was announced amid spiking infections even before the country recorded its first confirmed cases of the new, more highly transmissible omicron virus variant. Bars, restaurants, nonessential stores, cinemas and theaters were among the public places forced to shut from 5 p.m. until 5 a.m. under the new lockdown. Wilko Klippens, who runs the Biessels cafe on the Grote Markt square in the city of Nijmegen, said the latest lockdown will further eat into his savings. "We're going to keep all the staff. You know, they're going to pay their rent, pay their education. So yeah, it's on us," he said. "So the money we saved for retirement is the money we pay the staff with and the rent." The restrictions took effect hours after Health Minister Hugo de Jonge announced that at least 13 travelers who arrived at Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport on Friday tested positive for the new variant. He urged other travelers who arrived last week from southern Africa to get tested as well.

### Thousands protest coronavirus restrictions in Czech capital

**PRAGUE** (AP)—Thousands rallied in the Czech capital of Prague on Sunday to protest the government's restrictive measures to tackle a record surge of coronavirus infections. The protesters included members and supporters of a number of fringe political parties and groups that failed to win any parliamentary seats in October's election. It was their third protest in the last two weeks. The participants didn't wear face coverings or follow social distancing rules and drank beer despite a ban on drinking alcohol in public. At Prague's Letna Park, the protesters chanted "Freedom!" and "We've had enough!" while displaying banners that discouraged getting vaccinated such as ones reading"My body my choice." Police didn't intervene. The country has been setting repeated records in new daily infections, hitting a record high of almost 28,000 cases on Thursday. The infection rate was at 1,191 new cases per 100,000 residents over the past seven days. Overall, the nation of 10.7 million has registered over 2.1 million cases with 32,837 COVID-related deaths. It has lower vaccination rates than many other EU nations.

# Asian leaders at economic summit vow to help Afghanistan

**ASHGABAT, Turkmenistan** (AP)—The leaders of several Asian countries called for boosting their economic ties and pledged to provide assistance to Afghanistan during a summit in Turkmenistan on Sunday.

The countries, which are part of the 10-member Economic Cooperation Organization that includes Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan and six ex-Soviet nations, called for removing trade barriers and developing new transport corridors across the region. They also voiced concerns about the situation in Afghanistan, which has been taken over by the Taliban, and promised to help stabilize the country.

Speaking at the summit, Pakistan's President Arif Alvi pointed at the threat of Afghanistan's economic and financial collapse, saying the Islamic world needs to pool efforts to help avert a "catastrophe that could foment chaos and conflict." He said countries in the region need to move quickly to help rebuild the Afghan economy, shore up the country's health care and education systems and offer humanitarian assistance.

He noted that the stabilization of Afghanistan would allow the implementation of long-stalled infrastructure projects, including a gas pipeline, railways and power grids linking countries in the region.

Turkmenistan's President Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov emphasized that those projects would help offer "colossal cooperation prospects and help attract foreign investment," strongly benefiting Afghanistan and its neighbors.

Turkish President Recept Tayyip Erdogan noted the importance of rebuilding Afghanistan's economy, saying that the country's meltdown could trigger a massive refugee exodus that would affect the entire region. He said Turkish humanitarian groups have stepped up efforts to deliver humanitarian aid to the Afghan people.

Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi also offered help, saying that Afghanistan desperately needs food, fuel and financial assistance as the winter looms.

On the sidelines of the summit, officials from Azerbaijan, Iran and Turkmenistan signed a trilateral deal on natural gas deliveries from gas-rich Turkmenistan to Iran and onto Azerbaijan.

# Nation

## Supreme Court set to take up all-or-nothing abortion fight

**WASHINGTON** (AP)—Both sides are telling the Supreme Court there's no middle ground in Wednesday's showdown over abortion. The justices can either reaffirm the constitutional right to an abortion or wipe it away altogether.

Roe v. Wade, the landmark 1973 ruling that declared a nationwide right to abortion, is facing its most serious challenge in 30 years in front of a court with a 6-3 conservative majority that has been remade by three appointees of President Donald Trump.

"There are no half measures here," said Sherif Girgis, a Notre Dame law professor who once served as a law clerk for Justice Samuel Alito.

A ruling that overturned Roe and the 1992 case of Planned Parenthood v. Casey would lead to outright bans or severe restrictions on abortion in 26 states, according to the Guttmacher Institute, a research organization that supports abortion rights.

The case being argued Wednesday comes from Mississippi, where a 2018 law would ban abortions after 15 weeks of pregnancy, well before viability. The Supreme Court has never allowed states to ban abortion before the point at roughly 24 weeks when a fetus can survive outside the womb.

The justices are separately weighing disputes over Texas' much earlier abortion ban, at roughly six weeks, though those cases turn on the unique structure of the law and how it can be challenged in court, not the abortion right. Still, abortion rights advocates were troubled by the court's 5-4 vote in September to allow the Texas law, which relies on citizen lawsuits to enforce it, to take effect in the first place.

"This is the most worried I've ever been," said Shannon Brewer, who runs the only abortion clinic in Mississippi, the Jackson Women's Health Organization.

The clinic offers abortions up to 16 weeks of pregnancy and about 10% of abortions it performs take place after the 15th week, Brewer said.

She also noted that since the Texas law took effect, the clinic has seen a substantial increase in patients, operating five days or six days a week instead of two or three.

Lower courts blocked the Mississippi law, as they have other abortion bans that employ traditional enforcement methods by state and local officials.

The Supreme Court is seen at dusk in Washington, Oct. 22, 2021. AP

The Supreme Court had never before even agreed to hear a case over a pre-viability abortion ban. But after Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg's death last year and her replacement by Justice Amy Coney Barrett, the third of Trump's appointees, the court said it would take up the case.

Trump had pledged to appoint "pro-life justices" and predicted they would lead the way in overturning the abortion rulings. Only one justice, Clarence Thomas, has publicly called for Roe to be overruled.

The court could uphold the Mississippi law without explicitly overruling Roe and Casey, an outcome that would satisfy neither side.

Abortion-rights advocates say that result would amount to the same thing as an outright ruling overturning the earlier cases because it would erase the rationale undergirding nearly a half-century of Supreme Court law.

"A decision upholding this ban is tantamount to overruling Roe. The ban prohibits abortion around two months before viability," said Julie Rikelman, who will argue the case for the clinic.

On the other side, abortion opponents argue that the court essentially invented abortion law in Roe and Casey, and shouldn't repeat that mistake in this case.

If the justices uphold Mississippi's law, they'll have to explain why, said Thomas Jipping, a Heritage Foundation legal fellow. They can either overrule the two big cases, Jipping said, "or they're going to have to come up with another made-up rule."

Conservative commentator Ed Whelan said such an outcome would be a "massive defeat" on par with the Casey decision in 1992, in which a court with eight justices appointed by Republican presidents unexpectedly reaffirmed Roe.

This court appears far more conservative than the one that decided Casey, and legal historian Mary Ziegler at Florida State University's law school, said the court probably would "overrule Roe or set us on a path to doing so."

Chief Justice John Roberts might find the more incremental approach appealing if he can persuade a majority of the court to go along. Since Roberts became chief justice in 2005, the court has moved in smaller steps on some issues, even when it appeared there was only a binary choice.

It took two cases for the court to rip out the heart of the federal Voting Rights Act that curbed potentially discriminatory voting laws in states with a history of discrimination.

## Trial set to start on charges Smollett faked racist attack

**CHICAGO** (AP)—A popular actor steps out onto the street and is brutally reminded that, despite his fame and wealth, places still exist where the color of his skin and sexual orientation put him in danger.

That was the story that ricocheted around the world after Jussie Smollett, a Black and openly gay actor, reported to Chicago police that he was the victim of a hate crime.

Nearly three years later, Smollett is about to stand trial on charges that he staged the whole thing.

He was charged with felony disorderly conduct after law enforcement and prosecutors said he lied to police about what happened in the early morning hours of Jan. 29, 2019, in downtown Chicago. He has pleaded not guilty. Jury selection is scheduled to begin Monday. Disorderly conduct, a class 4 felony, carries a sentence of up to three years in prison but experts have said it is more likely that if Smollett is convicted he would be placed on probation and perhaps ordered to perform community service.

Smollett

Smollett told police he was walking home from a Subway sandwich shop at 2 a.m. when two men he said recognized him from the TV show "Empire" began hurling racial and homophobic slurs at him. He said the men struck him, looped a makeshift noose around his neck and shouted, "This is MAGA country," a reference to then-President Donald Trump's campaign slogan, "Make America Great Again."

Reaction to his reported assault underscored the increasingly polarized political landscape; Democratic politicians and others called it a shocking example of Trump-era bigotry and hate, while Republicans accused liberals of rushing to paint the president's supporters as racists.

Just weeks later came the stunning announcement that Smollett was charged with staging the attack to further his career and secure a higher salary. And, police said, he hired two brothers from Nigeria, to pretend to attack him for $3,500.

This made the spotlight on Smollett shine even brighter, but this time he was vilified as someone willing to use one of the most potent symbol of racism in the U.S. to further his career.

## Fauci fires back at Cruz over COVID claims about Chinese lab

**WASHINGTON** (AP)—Dr. Anthony Fauci, the government's top infectious diseases expert, blasted Sen. Ted Cruz for suggesting that Fauci be investigated for statements he made about COVID-19 and said the criticism by the Texas Republican was an attack on science.

"I should be prosecuted? What happened on Jan. 6, senator?" Fauci, who is President Joe Biden's chief medical adviser, said in an interview that aired Sunday on CBS' "Face the Nation." It was a reference to the violent insurrection at the U.S. Capitol by supporters of then-President Donald Trump that was stoked as Cruz helped lead GOP objections to Congress' certifying the 2020 election results.

"I'm just going to do my job and I'm going to be saving lives, and they're going to be lying," Fauci said.

Some Republicans, including Cruz and Sen. Rand Paul, R-Ky., have accused Fauci of lying to Congress when he denied in May that the National Institutes of Health funded "gain of function" research—the practice of enhancing a virus in a lab to study its potential impact in the real world—at a virology lab in Wuhan, China. Cruz has urged Attorney General Merrick Garland to appoint a special prosecutor to investigate Fauci's statements.

Fauci, the director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, called the GOP criticism nonsense.

"Anybody who's looking at this carefully realizes that there's a distinct anti-science flavor to this," he said.

Cruz and Paul say an October letter from NIH to Congress contradicts Fauci. But no clear evidence or scientific consensus exists that "gain of function" research was funded by NIH, and there is no link of U.S.-funded research to the emergence of COVID-19. NIH has repeatedly maintained that its funding did not go to such research involving boosting the infectivity and lethality of a pathogen.

When asked in the CBS interview whether Republicans might be raising the claims to make him a scapegoat and deflect criticism of Trump, Fauci said, "of course, you have to be asleep not to figure that one out."

## ACROSS THE NATION

### Body of missing 2-year-old girl found in Indiana river

**COLUMBUS, Ind.** (AP)—A diver on Sunday found the body of a 2-year-old girl reported missing after her father was pulled from his partially submerged truck in a southern Indiana river. Her body was discovered in the White River more than 2 miles (3.22 kilometers) from where her father was pulled from the same river Friday, according to Bartholomew County Sheriff Matt Myers and the Indiana Department of Natural Resources. "Although my heart goes out to the family and friends, there's a bit of comfort knowing that we have her now," Myers said. The father, 39-year-old Jeremy Sweet, of Columbus, was hospitalized with hypothermia. He told authorities he wasn't certain about what led up to his truck entering the river off a 15-foot embankment. Emma was last seen with her father about noon Wednesday, according to the sheriff's office. Duck hunters spotted the father's truck at about 6 a.m. Friday.

### Police: Officer in Maryland fatally shoots man with knife

**GLEN BURNIE, Md.** (AP)—A police officer in Maryland fatally shot a knife-wielding man and later found a woman dead inside the same home, authorities in Anne Arundel County said Sunday. The incident in Glen Burnie began with a phone call to police from a woman who said that she and a juvenile had been chased out of a house by a male family member with a knife, police spokesperson Jacklyn Davis told reporters Sunday evening. The woman who called police also said that she saw blood in the home and that an elderly woman who lives there could not be located, Davis said. Responding officers knocked on the door and announced their presence multiple times before entering the home, Davis said. Once inside, officers told the man to drop the knife multiple times before trying to subdue him several times with a bean bag "munition" and a stun gun. The bean bag and Taser had little to no effect on the man, Davis said. "That subject then raised the weapon toward officers," Davis said. "At that time, one of our officers fired his duty weapon."

# Asia

Newly commissioned upgraded F-16V fighter jets are seen at Air Force base in Chiayi in southwestern Taiwan Thursday, Nov. 18, 2021. AP

## Taiwan sends jets after 27 Chinese planes enter zone

**TAIPEI, Taiwan** (AP)—Taiwan said 27 Chinese aircraft entered its air defense buffer zone on Sunday, the latest in a long series of incursions as part of Beijing's pressure on the self-ruled island.

The Defense Ministry said Taiwan scrambled combat aircraft to "warn" the Chinese planes to leave. It also deployed missile systems to monitor them.

Sunday's incursion included 18 fighter jets and five H-6 bombers, as well as a Y-20 aerial refueling aircraft, according to Taiwan's Defense Ministry.

The Chinese aircraft flew into Taiwan's air defense identification zone near the southern part of the island and out into the Pacific Ocean before returning to China, according to a map by Taiwan authorities.

Over the past year, the frequency of Chinese incursions has increased, with about 150 aircraft over a period of four days.

China's air force mission toward Taiwan came as Chinese President Xi Jinping met with officers at a military conference, where he called for military talent cultivation to support and strengthen the armed forces, according to state-owned news agency Xinhua.

Xi said that talent is imperative in achieving victory in military competition and gaining the upper hand in future wars, according to Xinhua.

China claims democratically ruled Taiwan as its own territory, to be brought under its control by force if necessary. It refuses to recognize the island's government and has increasingly sought to isolate the independence-leaning administration of President Tsai Ing-wen.

Taiwan and China split during a civil war in 1949, and Beijing opposes Taiwan's involvement in international organizations.

## PH rejects China demand to remove ship

**MANILA, Philippines** (AP)—The Philippines' defense chief rejected on Thursday China's renewed demand that it remove its outpost on a disputed South China Sea shoal and said Chinese coast guard ships should leave the area and stop blocking Manila's supply boats.

Philippine forces use a grounded warship, the BRP Sierra Madre, as an outpost on the submerged but strategic shoal that is at the center of an ongoing dispute with China.

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana said the Second Thomas Shoal lies within the exclusive economic zone of the Philippines under the 1982 U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea, which China has ratified. He said a 2016 ruling by a U.N.-backed arbitration tribunal also invalidated China's claims to the busy waterway, leaving them without any legal basis.

China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs asked the Philippines Wednesday to "honor its commitment" and remove its grounded vessel on Ren'ai Jiao, the name Beijing uses for the shoal, which Filipinos refer to as Ayungin. Chinese coast guard ships have allowed Manila's boats to bring food and other supplies to Filipino forces at the shoal for humanitarian reasons, it said.

But defense chief Lorenzana told reporters he was not aware of any Philippine government commitment to remove its navy ship, which has been grounded upon the shoal since 1999.

"We can do whatever we want there and it is they who are actually trespassing," he said.

Chinese coast guard ships have surrounded the shoal in a years-long territorial standoff and tried to block Philippine supply boats in past years. In the latest confrontation, Chinese coast guard ships used water cannons to forcibly turn back two supply boats manned by Philippine navy personnel last week, sparking outrage and warnings from Manila.

Following the Chinese blockade, the United States said it was standing by the Philippines and reiterated that an armed attack on Philippine public vessels in the South China Sea would invoke U.S. mutual defense commitments under the two allies' 1951 Mutual Defense Treaty.

The Philippine navy successfully transported supplies and fresh personnel to the Sierra Madre this week then left without any major incident after Lorenzana talked with China's ambassador to Manila. President Rodrigo Duterte, who has nurtured close ties with Beijing, angrily condemned the Chinese blockade in a video summit of Southeast Asian leaders with Chinese President Xi Jingping. Xi did not specifically react to Duterte's remarks but said China will not bully its smaller neighbors.

# World

## WORLD BRIEFS

### Sudan says 6 soldiers killed in Ethiopia border fighting

**CAIRO** (AP)—Sudan's armed forces said on Sunday that six of its forces were killed in fighting in the country's border region with Ethiopia. It came a day after the military claimed that Ethiopian military and militia forces attacked the border area of al-Fashaqa, a disputed agricultural area that straddles the two countries. A report by Sudan's state news agency on Saturday said that Sudanese forces had been in the area to protect farmers harvesting crops. The fighting is the latest turbulence for Sudan, after generals deposed the country's transitional civilian government in late October and arrested more than a hundred officials. Mass protests followed the coup, and the generals eventually reinstated Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok under military oversight amid international pressure. However many of the country's pro-democratic forces continue to call for the military to release its grip on power. Sudan had been struggling with its transition to a democratic government since the military overthrow of former autocrat Omar al-Bashir in 2019, following a mass uprising against three decades of his rule.

### Tens of thousands without power in UK in storm's wake

**LONDON** (AP)—Tens of thousands of people in Scotland and northern England remained without power Sunday after a storm brought sleet, subzero temperatures and disruptions across much of the U.K. Icy gusts caused power cuts around the border between Scotland and England, with Northern Powergrid saying it recorded 1,100 instances of damage requiring significant repairs. It said it was trying to restore service to 40,000 customers, while the SP Energy Networks said 21,000 customers remained without power Sunday. "The storm was well forecasted and despite being prepared, Storm Arwen resulted in damage of a scale and intensity not seen for 15 years," said Rod Gardner, Northern Powergrid's major incident manager. The power cuts came as forecasters issued ice warnings and said the coldest night of the season would hit parts of the U.K. later Sunday, with snowfall expected across the country and temperatures dropping to as low as -10 degrees Celsius (14 degrees Fahrenheit) in parts of Scotland and northern England.

### New variant not stopping New Zealand's reopening plans

**WELLINGTON, New Zealand** (AP)—The emergence of the omicron variant hasn't changed New Zealand's plans to ease restrictions in Auckland and move the nation into a new, more open phase of its pandemic response, Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern said Monday. Bars, restaurants and gyms in Auckland can reopen from late Thursday, ending a coronavirus lockdown that began in August. Around the country, a new "traffic light" system will bring an end to lockdowns but people will need to be fully vaccinated in order to guarantee participation in anything from getting a haircut to watching a concert. New Zealand on Sunday restricted travel from nine southern African countries in response to the omicron threat. Ardern said she didn't anticipate any further restrictions. She said as the new variant is studied more, New Zealand will continue doing fundamental things like contact tracing, isolating infectious people and requiring mask use in some settings.


MESSAGE OF APPRECIATION

*The Song of Memory*

*When someone we love passes on beyond life*
*in the world that we know and is gone,*
*A beautiful sense of their presence, like music*
*remembered by heart, lingers on…*
*When someone we love finds a wonderful*
*home in a world only faith can reveal,*
*Our memories can be like a song in the heart,*
*with the power to comfort and heal.*

*(Author Unknown)*

*We, the family of our dearly beloved*

†HERONIMO JESUS SABLAN ADA

*are deeply grateful for the outpouring support, care, kindness, words of comfort and wisdom, and the unconditional love extended to us during our most difficult time of our lives as we mourn and grieve the passing of our dearly beloved.*

*Our beloved, †Heronimo, was welcomed home by our Lord on November 3, 2021. Our loved one, †Heronimo, lived a fulfilling and blessed life. His grace and wisdom will be truly missed and instilled in our hearts. His beautiful and warm spirit and energy we will hold dear to us. His passing has affected us immensely but we are content knowing that he is with our Lord.*

*Let us rejoice in our lives and be blessed with the gifts of live, family and love. In God's Garden he may dwell, in our heart is where he lives. Thank you and May God bless us all.*

*Emiliana S. Ada and Family*

# Overdrive

## What's your car worth? Honda, Lexus take home JD Power Residual Value Award, again

By HENRY PAYNE
THE DETROIT NEWS

The 2020 Honda Passport. HONDA/TNS

Buy a new home and you can track its value on Zillow or Redfin. Buy a new car and JD Power is at your service tracking residual value.

If you own a Honda or Lexus, then your asset is looking pretty good.

That's the conclusion of ALG, a division of JD Power, and its 2022 Residual Value Awards which honor the Japanese companies as the top brands in the mass market and premium segments. In addition to the coveted brand awards, ALG handed out trophies to models in 29 segments this month, including the GMC Sierra HD as winner of ALG's first award for fullsize heavy duty pickup.

Other notable Detroit winners were the Dodge Charger for fullsize car and the Ford Bronco as off-road utility.

"It's Honda's tenth time winning the brand award. Toyota has only won once. There is only one other brand that's won our award and that's Subaru and they have won eight times," said ALG Vice President Eric Lyman in an interview.

ALG's awards recognize vehicles projected to hold the highest percentage of their manufacturer's suggested retail price after three-years of ownership. The value is a key factor in which models buyers shop for—as well a key variable in valuing the estimated $225 billion lease portfolio of vehicles in the United States.

The residual awards judge vehicles on long-term quality and design, as well as the overall brand desirability.

"We have these three Japanese brands (Honda, Subaru, and Toyota) well known for their long term durability, quality and resale value winning the award year after year," said Lyman. "But we've seen the domestic brands and Korean brands close the gap. We've got representation from the Detroit Three auto makers with Ford Bronco winning for (their) first year in market. Dodge Charger is the perennial winner in the full-size segment, and Chevy Tahoe winning in full-size utility."

For model-year 2022, 284 vehicles were assessed in 29 segments. Eligibility for the brand award requires a manufacturer to have model entries in at least four different segments.

In taking home the mass market brand bauble, Honda also won three model segments. By contrast Lexus won best premium brand even as none of its models won a segment outright.

"The achievement of Lexus speaks to an impressive, industry-leading continuity of residual value across its entire lineup," Lyman said. "It's like a decathlete who doesn't have to win any of the individual 10 events but scores enough points in each of them to stand atop the podium."

Honda and Hyundai share the most model-level awards, with three each. Audi, Kia, Land Rover, Mercedes-Benz, Subaru and Toyota had winners in two categories.

## Nissan investing in electric vehicles, battery development

**TOKYO** (AP)—Nissan said Monday it is investing 2 trillion yen ($17.6 billion) over the next five years and developing a cheaper, more powerful battery to boost its electric vehicle lineup.

The Japanese automaker's chief executive, Makoto Uchida, said 15 new electric vehicles will be available by fiscal 2030. Nissan Motor Co. is aiming for a 50% "electrification" of the company's model lineup, under what Uchida called the "Nissan Ambition 2030" long-term plan. Electrified vehicles include hybrids and other kinds of environmentally friendly models other than just electric vehicles.

Uchida

The effort is focused mainly on electric vehicles to cut emissions and meet various customers' needs, said Uchida. Nissan also will reduce carbon emissions at its factories, he added.

The company has been struggling to put the scandal of its former Chairman Carlos Ghosn behind it. Ghosn, who led Nissan for two decades, after he was sent to Japan by French alliance partner Renault, was arrested in Tokyo in 2018 on various financial misconduct charges.

Uchida made no mention of the scandal but referred to "past mistakes" he promised won't be repeated at Nissan.

Nissan's "electrification" rests on developing a new ASSB, or all solid state battery, that it categorized as "a breakthrough" for being cheaper and generating more power than batteries now in use.

That means electric powertrains can be more easily used in trucks, vans and other heavier vehicles because the batteries can be smaller. The ASSB will be in mass production by 2028, according to Nissan.

The costs of electric vehicles will also fall thanks to the battery innovation to levels comparable with regular gasoline cars, Uchida said.

"Nissan has emerged from a crisis and is ready to make a new start," he said.

All top automakers, including Nissan's Japanese rival Toyota Motor Corp., are working on electric vehicles, amid growing concern over climate change and sustainability. Global consumers are also demanding more safety features.

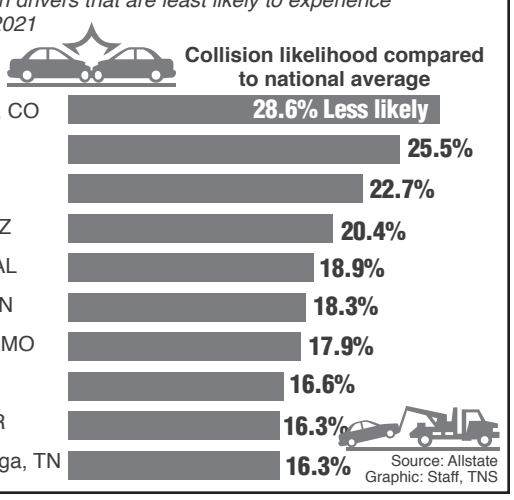
Uchida said Nissan was hiring 3,000 engineers to strengthen its research, including digital technology for vehicles.

Nissan, based in Yokohama, Japan, has suffered recently from the computer chips shortage that's slammed all automakers because of lockdowns and other measures at chip factories to combat the coronavirus pandemic.

The maker of the Infiniti luxury models, Leaf electric vehicle and Z sportscar is projecting a return to profitability for the fiscal year through March 2022 after racking up two straight years of losses.

### Safest driving cities in the U.S.

*The cities with drivers that are least likely to experience collisions in 2021*


Collision likelihood compared to national average
1. Fort Collins, CO 28.6% Less likely
2. Boise, ID 25.5%
3. Lincoln, NE 22.7%
4. Chandler, AZ 20.4%
5. Huntsville, AL 18.9%
6. Knoxville, TN 18.3%
7. Springfield, MO 17.9%
8. Reno, NV 16.6%
9. Eugene, OR 16.3%
10. Chattanooga, TN 16.3%
Source: Allstate
Graphic: Staff, TNS

## Faulty warning light

### MOTORMOUTH

By BOB WEBER
Tribune News Service

*Send questions along with name and town to motormouth.tribune@gmail.com.*

**Q: I own a 2000 Honda Accord. It constantly shows the red brake light on the dash. Previously, the light would appear only intermittently. I had the brakes checked out two different times and everything is in good condition. How can I correct this?**

**A:** Your car has a brake lamp warning system. Should a lamp burn out, a warning is triggered. Sometimes the lamp may check out fine and even illuminate, but a weak ground or dirty contacts will cause a change in the sensed voltage on the circuit similar to a burned out lamp. Sometimes, the problem is intermittent and hard to pin down.

■■■

**Q: A few months ago, I brought my Nissan in for service and I asked them to check on a problem I was having with the hatchback. They said they would have to charge me a $160 diagnostic fee. Is the diagnostic fee a new charge every dealer service is charging? Does the diagnostic fee go toward the cost of any repair that might be needed or is it just an extra charge?**

**A:** Doctors charge for examinations and diagnoses, electricians and plumbers charge for showing up at your door. Most professional auto service shops charge a diagnostic fee. Heck, they have to pay the technician for his or her time. And, yes, the diagnostic fee is generally rolled into the repair if you decide to have the work done.

■■■

**Q: I too love your comments about oil change intervals. I drive a 2014 Prius and put on only about 6,000 miles a year. My manual says I only need to change the oil every year or 10,000 miles. However, after changing my oil religiously every 3,000 miles or 3 months most of my life, it makes me feel very uncomfortable to go that long between changes. My car does not have an oil life indicator readout, so I regularly check the oil level and look to see if it is changing color. However, is there any better way to accurately monitor oil quality at home between changes?**

**A:** To get an analysis of motor oil, you have to send it away to a lab. It is not terribly expensive, just inconvenient. Plus, your Prius engine doesn't do as much work as a non-hybrid car's engine. Back in the olden days, 3,000-mile oil changes were necessary because the oil suffered from gasoline contamination and other stuff. Today's oils are far superior to the former ones and engine tolerances are much tighter. You are doing the right thing by routinely checking the oil level.

■■■

**Q I have two 2020 Hyundai Tucsons. Periodically, while driving, I hear a chime and a message appears on the dashboard. The message only lasts for a few seconds. I haven't been able to make out what it says, maybe, "keep hands on the wheel". Dealer has no idea what it says. Apparently, it isn't an important warning, but it is a real puzzler. Any ideas?**

**A:** Your car has lane keeping assist. Cameras see the lane lines on the road and, if you drift too far to either side, a warning is issued. On some vehicles, the steering wheel will gently tug to let you know you are drifting wide. The system doesn't work if there are no lane lines or if weather - such as snow - obscures the lines. One more thing: If you travel in a straight line for a long time, the warning will activate. You may choose to turn the system off. Check your owner's manual for how to do it.

# Life & Style

## Fashion designer Virgil Abloh dies of cancer at 41

**NEW YORK** (AP)—Virgil Abloh, a leading designer whose groundbreaking fusions of streetwear and high couture made him one of the most celebrated tastemakers in fashion and beyond, has died of cancer. He was 41.

Abloh's death was announced Sunday by the luxury group LVMH (Louis Vuitton Moët Hennessy) and Abloh's own Off-White label, which he founded in 2013. Abloh was the artistic director for Louis Vuitton's menswear, but his ubiquitous, consumer-friendly presence in culture was wide-ranging and dynamic. Some compared him to Jeff Koons. Others hailed him as his generation's Karl Lagerfeld.

Abloh

"We are all shocked after this terrible news. Virgil was not only a genius designer, a visionary, he was also a man with a beautiful soul and great wisdom," Bernard Arnault, chairman and chief executive of LVMH, said in a statement.

A statement from Abloh's family on the designer's Instagram account said Abloh was diagnosed two years ago with cardiac angiosarcoma, a rare form of cancer in which a tumor occurs in the heart.

"He chose to endure his battle privately since his diagnosis in 2019, undergoing numerous challenging treatments, all while helming several significant institutions that span fashion, art, and culture," the statement read.

## 'Encanto,' 'House of Gucci' fuel Thanksgiving box office

**NEW YORK** (AP)—Thanksgiving weekend moviegoing was still far from the feast it normally is, but Disney's "Encanto" and the Lady Gaga-led "House of Gucci" both gave a lift to two genres that have been particularly battered by the pandemic: family movies and adult dramas.

"Encanto" led the box office with $27 million over the weekend and $40.3 million across the five-day holiday frame, according to studio estimates Sunday. While well off the pace of past Disney animated movies released over Thanksgiving—"Coco" launched at the same time of year with $72 million and "Ralph Breaks the Internet" did as well with $84 million—the result was the best opening for an animated movie during the pandemic.

Family films have been especially slow to bounce back, though with kids increasingly getting vaccinated, hopes have been rising that releases such as "Encanto" can lead a rebound. Disney earlier this year released films like Pixar's "Luca" straight to Disney+, but put out "Encanto," reportedly made for $120 million, exclusively in theaters. The film, about a magical Colombia family and featuring original songs from Lin-Manuel Miranda, took in $70 million globally.

This image released by Disney shows Mirabel, voiced by Stephanie Beatriz, in a scene from the animated film "Encanto." DISNEY VIA AP

MGM's "House of Gucci," from director Ridley Scott, debuted with $14.2 million over the three-day weekend and $21.8 million across five days. That, too, was among the best performances for an adult drama. Scott's own "The Last Duel," for Disney's 20th Century Studios, launched with a paltry $4.8 million in October.

The $75 million-budgeted "House of Gucci," about the family behind the Italian fashion brand, features a large cast including Adam Driver, Jared Leto and Al Pacino. But its star, Lady Gaga, who plays Patrizia Reggiani, especially drove the turnout. According to MGM, 59% of the audience was female and 45% were between the ages of 18-35. About 34% were 45 years and older—a higher turnout among older moviegoers than most releases have seen.

"Originality still counts in the public's mind," said Erik Loomis, distribution chief for MGM. "We were really pleased with the results. If you asked me going into the weekend, I was praying that the predictions were right because you just don't know today. You just don't know how the market's going to react."

Thanksgiving weekend often accounts for around $250 million in ticket sales domestically. Overall business this weekend came in at about $142 million, according to data firm Comscore—a bit more than half of typical business but also almost seven times better than Thanksgiving 2020, when many theaters were still shuttered.

1. **"Encanto,"** $27 million.
2. **"Ghostbusters: Afterlife,"** $24.5 million.
3. **"House of Gucci,"** $14.2 million.
4. **"Eternals,"** $2.5 million.
5. **"Resident Evil: Welcome to Racoon City,"** $5.3 million.
6. **"Clifford the Big Red Dog,"** $4.9 million.
7. **"King Richard,"** $3.3 million.
8. **"Dune,"** $2.2 million.
9. **"No Time to Die,"** $1.8 million.
10. **"Venom: Let There Be Carnage,"** $1.6 million.

## Matthew McConaughey won't run for Texas governor in 2022

**AUSTIN, Texas** (AP)—Actor Matthew McConaughey isn't running for Texas governor after months of publicly flirting with the idea of becoming the latest celebrity candidate.

The Academy Award winner said in a video posted Sunday night that political leadership was not a route he was choosing to take "at this moment." McConaughey, 52, said he would instead focus on supporting businesses and foundations that create pathways for others to succeed.

The Texas governor's race is already shaping up to be one of the nation's highest-profile contests in 2022. Republican Gov. Greg Abbott is seeking a third term and Democrat Beto O'Rourke, coming off failed bids for the U.S. Senate and president, announced month that he was getting in the race.

The "Dazed and Confused" and "Dallas Buyers Club" star had never said what party—if any—he would run under while acknowledging that he was mulling a run for governor in his home state. McConaughey had also shied away from going into policy specifics and positions on contentious issues in Texas.

"Politicians? The good ones can help us to get to where we need to go, yeah," McConaughey said in the video posted to Twitter. "But let's be clear, they can't do anything for us unless we choose to do for ourselves."

In California, former Olympian Caitlyn Jenner ran for governor this year in a failed GOP-led recall effort against Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom but gained little momentum.

## Merriam-Webster chooses vaccine as the 2021 word of the year

**NEW YORK** (AP)—With an expanded definition to reflect the times, Merriam-Webster has declared an omnipresent truth as its 2021 word of the year: vaccine.

"This was a word that was extremely high in our data every single day in 2021," Peter Sokolowski, Merriam-Webster's editor-at-large, told The Associated Press ahead of Monday's announcement.

"It really represents two different stories. One is the science story, which is this remarkable speed with which the vaccines were developed. But there's also the debates regarding policy, politics and political affiliation. It's one word that carries these two huge stories," he said.

The selection follows "vax" as word of the year from the folks who publish the Oxford English Dictionary. And it comes after Merriam-Webster chose "pandemic" as tops in lookups last year on its online site.

"The pandemic was the gun going off and now we have the aftereffects," Sokolowski said.

## Woman tries to balance life with two mothers

**DEAR ABBY**: I have two mothers: my biological mother and Mom, who raised me. I share everything with Mom—my hopes, dreams, fears and everything in between. My biological mother and I are not as close. We never have been. I don't have a single good childhood memory with her in it.

Lately, my bio mother has been extremely jealous of my relationship with Mom, even though she has never done anything to facilitate the same relationship with me. She's pushy and constantly oversteps boundaries. Because of this, when I found out I was pregnant, I chose not to tell her.

I'm now 36 weeks pregnant, and someone adjacent to my inner circle has informed her of my pregnancy and due date. She contacted my family FUMING about my not telling her, insisting she had a "right" to know. I feel this is her, once again, feeling entitled to my life and trying to treat me as property. I do not feel she is entitled to any details about my life. Am I wrong?

GUARDED IN ILLINOIS

**DEAR GUARDED: You are not wrong, and I can see why you are feeling invaded. You are entitled to privacy if you want it. Your birth mother is "entitled" only to those details of your life you are willing to share with her. (When DID you intend to share the happy news with her? After the birth?) You may need to distance yourself from the person who gave your birth mother the news if you want to avoid similar breaches in the future.**

■ ■ ■ ■

**DEAR ABBY**: I'm writing about "Anxious About Alcohol in Georgia" (Aug. 30), the teen who was torn between his parents' views on alcohol as he prepares for his first year of college. In Colorado, Georgia and many other states, minors ARE prohibited from possessing and drinking alcohol—with an important exception. That is, doing it in the presence of and under the supervision of their parents in their home.

I'm not condoning reckless behavior, but when I was growing up, my parents let us try beer and wine at an early age. It was pretty strong, and we didn't like it. We were never encouraged to get drunk or use it in excess. But we learned about it, tasted it and understood the good and bad when dealing with alcohol. I believe this is why my sisters and I never had issues. We have always been responsible, and I'm convinced this is a responsible way to introduce alcohol to a minor.

We gain knowledge through experience. Having that experience in a safe environment with the proper guidance and supervision is a must. Better to learn with a responsible parent than a frat brother you just met. Agree?

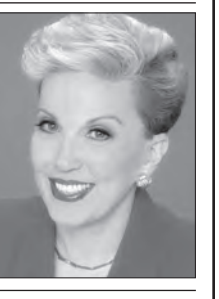
ALLAN IN COLORADO

**DEAR ALLAN: Yes, I do. And thank you for pointing out that provision in the law. Many other readers echoed your sentiments about demystifying the allure of alcohol by introducing it in the home under parental supervision. It could prevent some young people from going wild the minute they reach the campus.**

*Good advice for everyone—teens to seniors—is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)*

### DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



*Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.*

# Pastimes

## Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

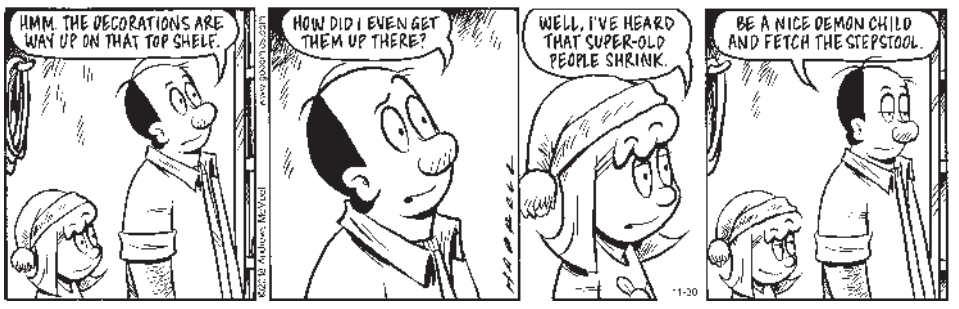
WHERE'S MY JACKET?
IT'S RIGHT ON THE FLOOR WHERE YOU LEFT IT.
IT'S STILL ON THE FLOOR? WHY DIDN'T YOU PUT IT AWAY?
GEE, MY OWN COPY OF THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION.
11-30 WATERSON

## Garfield®

By Jim Davis

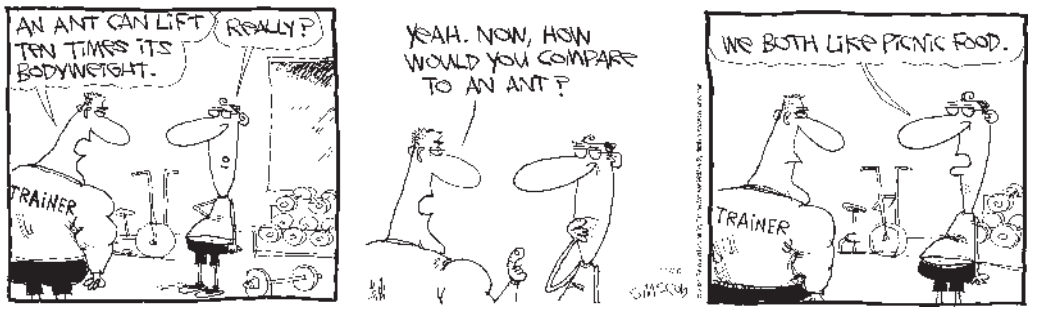
## Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


HMM. THE DECORATIONS ARE WAY UP ON THAT TOP SHELF.
HOW DID I EVEN GET THEM UP THERE?
WELL, I'VE HEARD THAT SUPER-OLD PEOPLE SHRINK.
BE A NICE DEMON CHILD AND FETCH THE STEPSTOOL.
11-30

## The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy


AN ANT CAN LIFT TEN TIMES ITS BODYWEIGHT.
REALLY?
TRAINER
YEAH. NOW, HOW WOULD YOU COMPARE TO AN ANT?
WE BOTH LIKE PICNIC FOOD.
TRAINER

## CROSSWORD

*By Eugene Sheffer*

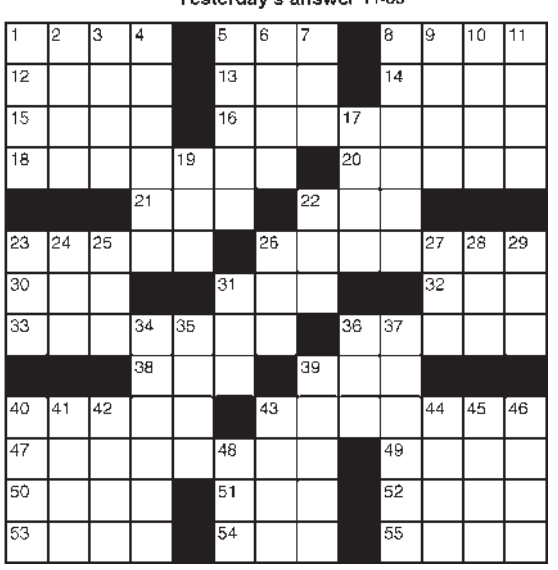
**ACROSS**
1 Furniture brand
5 Young fox
8 Prolonged sleep
12 Farmer's place
13 Anger
14 Baseball stats
15 October birthstone
16 Pasta variety
18 Shade trees
20 Insurance giant
21 Early hrs.
22 Humorist
23 Big parade sponsor
26 Flax product
30 Actress Mendes
31 London's Big —
32 Lucy of "Kill Bill"
33 16th president
36 Cologne's river
38 Frequently
39 Sock part
40 Engine sound
43 Pedigree
47 Job-hunter's aid
49 Sand formation
50 Part of a French play
51 Actor McShane
52 And others (Lat.)
53 Entryway
54 Snoop
55 Pixels

**DOWN**
1 Pop star
2 French military cap
3 Flair
4 Dawn-to-dusk
5 Pottery ovens
6 Eye part
7 Sawbuck
8 Vinegar bottles
9 Last writes?
10 Wis. neighbor
11 On the Adriatic, say
17 Profit
19 Type measures
22 Victory
23 Singer Tormé
24 Bird (Pref.)
25 Fire
26 Author Deighton
27 Yale grad
28 Aachen article
29 Payable
31 Diner order
34 Kitchen appliance
35 "How clumsy —!"
36 Harry Potter pal
37 Obeyed
39 Metallic-sounding
40 — the Impaler
41 "Little Caesar" role
42 Aware of
43 Deceitful person
44 Prefix with pilot
45 Pesky insect
46 Congers
48 Chips go-with

**Solution time: 22 mins.**

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| M | A | G | I | | B | U | G | | I | D | E | A |
| F | T | O | N | | I | M | O | | N | I | T | S |
| N | O | O | B | | I | A | N | D | M | A | R | K |
| U | N | F | U | R | L | | G | O | O | S | E | S |
| | | | L | E | I | A | | T | S | P | | |
| M | A | H | K | D | O | W | N | | I | O | M | E |
| O | X | O | | S | N | O | O | P | | R | A | E |
| P | E | A | S | | S | K | I | D | M | A | R | K |
| | | D | E | A | | E | S | A | I | | | |
| A | S | C | E | N | D | | I | S | | E | T | S |
| M | A | R | K | T | I | M | E | | D | R | A | T |
| F | R | E | E | | S | O | S | | E | M | M | A |
| M | A | W | R | | H | O | T | | R | A | P | T |

**Yesterday's answer 11-30**



**STUMPED?** For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955!** 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

**CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY:** Kaley Cuoco, 36; Elisha Cuthbert, 39; Ben Stiller, 56; Billy Idol, 66.

Happy Birthday: Weigh the pros and cons before you progress. Turn every negative into a positive, and keep your life simple, moderate and doable. An independent, do-it-all attitude will prove to work in your favor. Take note of what others do, but formulate and execute plans in a unique fashion. You won't be disappointed in the results you get. Your numbers are 8, 15, 21, 24, 30, 37, 46.

**ARIES** *(March 21-April 19):* Take a backseat, be patient and listen carefully. You stand to win if you understand your place, value and the best way to gain by accommodating others. Don't take a risk with your health, reputation or investments. ✪✪✪

**TAURUS** *(April 20-May 20):* A sudden change will backfire if you take on too much too fast. Take a moment to work out the logistics, and you'll realize what's required if you want to become successful. Self-improvement projects are in your best interest. ✪✪✪

**GEMINI** *(May 21-June 20):* Explore new possibilities, and use your skills to achieve something you want to conquer. Taking a diverse approach to life, work and happiness will bring stellar results and encourage exciting partnerships. Dedicate more time to educational pursuits and a promising future. ✪✪✪✪

**CANCER** *(June 21-July 22):* An incident will arise if you let your emotions take over. Focus on doing the best job possible, and you will receive recognition for a job well done. Refuse to let jealousy or insecurity cause a rift with someone you love. ✪✪

**LEO** *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Spend more time nurturing what you've worked so hard to build and the relationships that are meaningful to you, and you'll feel good about your accomplishments. Make arrangements that will help stabilize how you live and conduct your life. ✪✪✪✪

**VIRGO** *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Aim high and refuse to let anything or anyone stand in your way. Your expectations will exhaust you, but the rewards will replenish your soul. Hard work pays off, and wasting time arguing a moot point will slow you down. ✪✪✪

**LIBRA** *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Put your heart and soul into making your surroundings more convenient and comfortable. Your strength will come from doing what's best for you. Pay attention, expand your mind and put your energy where it will encourage prosperity and praise. ✪✪✪

**SCORPIO** *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Refrain from sharing personal information or revealing how you feel. Be a good listener; it will give you the upper hand when dealing with peers, friends and relatives. Take a unique approach to life, and you'll enjoy more and stress less. ✪✪✪

**SAGITTARIUS** *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Be clear about what you want and plan to do. Speak from the heart, and address matters that will help you get ahead. Don't underestimate others or take on more than you can handle. Inconsistency will hold you back. ✪✪✪✪

## SUDOKU

**Conceptis Sudoku** *By Dave Green*

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | | | | | 3 | | | 5 |
| | 2 | | | | | 6 | 9 | |
| | 4 | | 9 | 6 | 1 | | | |
| 6 | | 8 | | | | 9 | | |
| | | 1 | | 4 | | 7 | | |
| | | 7 | | | | 5 | | 2 |
| | | | 3 | 9 | 2 | | 6 | |
| | 1 | 6 | | | | | 2 | |
| 3 | | | 7 | | | | | 9 |

Difficulty Level ★★ 11/30

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

**Yesterday's Answer**

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 7 | 8 | 1 | 4 | 6 |
| 7 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 6 | 5 | 9 | 8 |
| 6 | 5 | 8 | 1 | 9 | 4 | 7 | 3 | 2 |
| 5 | 9 | 3 | 8 | 6 | 7 | 2 | 1 | 4 |
| 4 | 2 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 9 | 8 | 7 |
| 8 | 1 | 7 | 9 | 4 | 2 | 6 | 5 | 3 |
| 3 | 6 | 4 | 7 | 5 | 9 | 8 | 2 | 1 |
| 2 | 7 | 9 | 4 | 8 | 1 | 3 | 6 | 5 |
| 1 | 8 | 5 | 6 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 7 | 9 |

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## EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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**CAPRICORN** *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Make rational decisions. If you let your emotions take over, you will regret the promises you make. Put your health and personal needs first. Take a creative, energetic approach to work and how you handle money. Romance is in the stars. ✪✪

**AQUARIUS** *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Put more thought into investments, contracts and your lifestyle. Choose a healthy, fit way to live, and you will be happy with the results. Looking and feeling your best will give you the boost you need to do a good job. ✪✪✪✪✪

**PISCES** *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Mull over how you feel about your relationships with others. Make a point to reach out to someone who shares your beliefs and long-term goals. A healthy conversation will help resolve issues that can hold you back. ✪✪✪

**Birthday Baby:** You are emotional, caring and persistent. You are unique and astute.

*✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.*

## WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

**HOW TO PLAY:** All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

**NONFUNGIBLE TOKENS** **Solution: 5 letters**

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S | S | P | I | H | S | R | E | N | W | O | F | M | L | E |
| D | H | C | P | R | O | J | E | C | T | S | U | I | E | S |
| E | E | P | A | T | L | G | A | M | E | S | N | U | L | N |
| S | V | I | A | R | D | A | D | I | I | K | T | N | B | E |
| A | I | E | F | R | C | I | T | C | S | I | L | E | B | C |
| H | R | O | R | I | G | I | N | A | L | W | E | K | U | I |
| C | T | S | D | I | R | O | T | I | O | O | D | O | B | L |
| R | U | T | T | A | C | E | T | Y | O | R | G | T | S | K |
| U | A | A | R | A | T | Y | V | U | T | K | E | T | U | C |
| P | L | N | R | D | O | A | T | I | A | K | R | Y | E | O |
| C | A | D | E | N | C | E | B | E | R | A | O | U | U | L |
| O | S | A | S | S | E | T | D | A | F | F | L | O | W | B |
| P | D | R | O | C | E | R | M | I | S | A | L | B | U | M |
| Y | I | D | E | N | T | I | T | Y | V | E | S | A | R | E |
| R | E | S | T | R | I | C | T | I | O | N | I | A | H | C |

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**Yesterday's Answer: Traditions**

**Jo's Jewels Collector's Edition** is back by popular demand! Purchase online at www.WonderWordBooks.com.

# Fournette's 4 touchdowns lift Tampa Bay over Indianapolis

**INDIANAPOLIS** (AP)—Leonard Fournette capped a four-touchdown game with a 28-yard scoring run with 20 seconds left Sunday, giving Tampa Bay a 38-31 come-from-behind victory at Indianapolis.

Tom Brady led the Buccaneers (8-3) on the eight-play, 75-yard tiebreaking drive after getting the ball back with 3:29 to go. Fournette rushed 17 times for 100 yards and three scores. He also caught Brady's only touchdown pass.

The defending Super Bowl champs have won two straight overall while Brady improved to 16-4 all time against the Colts in his first appearance against Indy with Tampa Bay.

Indy (6-6) had a chance to force overtime when Isaiah Rodgers returned the kickoff 71 yards to the Bucs 32-yard line with 10 seconds left. But Carson Wentz's first pass to Jack Doyle fell incomplete and former Colts cornerback Pierre Desir picked off Wentz near the goal line as time expired.

The difference was turnovers. Tampa Bay converted its first three takeaways into 17 points—two taking away Colts scoring chances.

Tampa Bay Buccaneers' Leonard Fournette (7) celebrates a rushing touchdown during the second half of an NFL football game against the Indianapolis Colts, Sunday, Nov. 28, 2021, in Indianapolis. AP

## Packers 36, Rams 28

In Green Bay, WI, Aaron Rodgers withstood pain from a toe injury, threw two touchdown passes and also ran for a score.

The Rams outscored Green Bay 11-0 in the fourth quarter, but their comeback attempt ended when Adrian Amos recovered an onside kick with 17 seconds left.

Rodgers went 28 of 45 for 307 yards as the Packers bounced back from a 34-31 loss at Minnesota. The reigning MVP threw touchdown passes of 7 yards to Randall Cobb and 5 yards to A.J. Dillon.

Green Bay (9-3) has never lost consecutive games within the same season during Matt LaFleur's three-year coaching tenure.

Rodgers, who didn't practice all week, says he has a fracture of his pinky toe. The injury had caused him to practice just once in the week leading up to his 385-yard, four-touchdown performance at Minnesota.

The Rams (7-4) dropped their third straight game and continually made mistakes to create scoring opportunities for Green Bay, which scored 16 points off three Rams turnovers.

Matthew Stafford went 21 of 38 for 302 yards with three touchdown passes. But he also lost a fumble to set up a touchdown and had an interception returned for a touchdown. Stafford has thrown a pick-6 in each of the last three games.

## Ravens 16, Browns 10

In Baltimore, Lamar Jackson provided one brilliant highlight during an otherwise subpar performance and his 13-yard touchdown pass to Mark Andrews in the third quarter was enough to lift the Ravens.

Jackson threw a career-high four interceptions in this mistake-filled game, but the only touchdown for Baltimore was memorable. Dogged by Cleveland's pass rush all night, Jackson scrambled all the way back to about the 35-yard line before lofting a pass over the middle to a remarkably open Andrews in the end zone.

That made it 13-3, and the Ravens (8-3) held on to take over the top spot in the AFC standings.

Cleveland (6-6) never could get its running game—which entered ranked No. 1 in the league—going against the Baltimore defensive front. Nick Chubb managed only 16 yards on eight carries, and Kareem Hunt had 20 yards on seven attempts.

## Bengals 41, Steelers 10

In Cincinnati, Joe Mixon rushed for a career-high 165 yards and two touchdowns, Joe Burrow scrambled for a score and passed for another one and the Bengals swept the season series for the first time since 2009.

Mixon, coming off a rugged 123-yard, two-TD performance in a win over Las Vegas last week, pounded away for 117 yards in the first half. He helped the Bengals cruise to a third straight win over their AFC North rival after losing 11 straight in the series.

The Steelers (5-5-1) are winless in their past three games. The Bengals (7-4), dominated by Pittsburgh for so many years, have stamped themselves as a legitimate playoff contender.

Cincinnati scored on its first four drives, and former Steeler Mike Hilton returned an interception of Ben Roethlisberger for a 24-yard touchdown late in the first half to push the Cincinnati lead to 31-3 at the intermission.

## Patriots 36, Titans 13

In Foxborough, Mass., Mac Jones threw two touchdown passes, New England's defense forced four turnovers and the Patriots earned their sixth straight win.

The victory snapped New England's two-game skid against the Titans. The Patriots hadn't beaten Tennessee since former Patriots linebacker Mike Vrabel took over as coach in 2018. New England (8-4) improved to 6-1 against AFC opponents this season.

Jones completed 23 of 32 passes for 310 yards. Kendrick Bourne had both of the Patriots' TD receptions, finishing with five catches for 61 yards.

The Titans (8-4) stayed close early, but couldn't survive a bevy of errors that included three fumbles by their running backs and an interception by Ryan Tannehill. He finished 11 of 21 for 93 yards and a touchdown.

Playing without star Derrick Henry for the fourth straight game, the Titans had mixed results from their rushing attack. Dontrell Hilliard and D'Onta Foreman became the first Tennessee backs other than Henry to rush for 100 yards since 2018. Hilliard carried 12 times for a career-high 131 yards and a 68-yard TD. But he also had a fumble in the second quarter that set up a Patriots field goal.

## Broncos 28, Chargers 13

In Denver, rookie Patrick Surtain II picked off Justin Herbert twice, returning the second one 70 yards for a touchdown. The Broncos' big win sets up a showdown for the AFC West lead next weekend in Kansas City, where the game between Denver (6-5) and the Chiefs (7-4) already was flexed to Sunday night.

Surtain's first interception came in the end zone on a pass intended for tight end Jared Cook early in the fourth quarter. The Broncos converted that takeaway into a touchdown when Teddy Bridgewater hit tight end Eric Saubert from 9 yards to make it 21-7.

His second one came off the hands of Austin Ekeler, who watched helplessly as Surtain cradled his second interception and sprinted down the Broncos' jubilant sideline to push Denver's lead to 28-7.

## 49ers 34, Vikings 26

In Santa Clara, Calif., Deebo Samuel ran for two touchdowns before leaving with an injury and Elijah Mitchell ran for 133 yards and a score.

The matchup between two .500 teams fighting for wild-card spots was a highly entertaining one with six scores in the third quarter alone, including a 99-yard kickoff return score by Minnesota's Kene Nwangwu.

But the 49ers (6-5) made just enough plays, including a fourth-down stop near the goal line midway through the fourth quarter, to win their third straight following a stretch of five losses in six games.

Jimmy Garoppolo threw for 230 yards and a TD, but the Niners once again did more of their work on the ground, with Samuel's two scores making him the first receiver since the merger to run for five TDs in a season. Samuel had six carries for 66 yards and also caught one pass for 15 yards before leaving with a groin injury.

## Giants 13, Eagles 7

In East Rutherford, N.J., the Giants' defense rose up to intercept Jalen Hurts three times and held Philadelphia to a season-low in points in beating the error-prone Eagles.

Daniel Jones hit Philadelphia native Chris Myarick with a 1-yard score and Graham Gano kicked field goals of 35 and 39 yards as the Giants (4-7) somewhat responded to the firing of offensive coordinator Jason Garrett by ending the Eagles' two-game winning streak.

The Eagles (5-7) were their own worst enemy. They had four turnovers, with running back Boston Scott losing a fumble that Julian Love recovered at the New York 40 with 1:34 to play.

## Dolphins 33, Panthers 10

In Miami Gardens, Fla., Jaylen Waddle had nine catches for a season-best 137 yards and a touchdown, and the Dolphins forced Cam Newton into one of the worst statistical days of his career.

Myles Gaskin had two short rushing scores for Miami (5-7), the sixth team in NFL history to immediately follow a 1-7 start with four consecutive wins. Duke Riley blocked a punt that led to a score for Miami.

The quarterback matchup was totally one-sided. Miami's Tua Tagovailoa completed 27 of 31 passes for 230 yards and a score. Newton was pulled in the fourth quarter after completing just 5 of 21 passes for the Panthers (5-7), who lost for the seventh time in their past nine games.

Newton finished with 92 yards passing, no touchdowns and two interceptions. It all added up to a quarterback rating of 5.8, by far the worst of his career. He did have Carolina's lone touchdown, a 1-yard spin in the first quarter.

## Falcons 21, Jaguars 14

In Jacksonville, Fla., Cordarrelle Patterson scored twice in his return from an ankle injury, and the Falcons found the end zone and the win column for the first time in three weeks.

The Falcons (5-6) managed just a field goal in their previous two games, lopsided losses to Dallas and New England in which they turned over the ball a combined seven times and failed to score a touchdown in consecutive games for the first time since 1987.

They put an emphasis on playing "smarter football" against Jacksonville, and it paid off. It surely helped that the Jaguars (2-9) made all the early mistakes.

Trevor Lawrence threw an interception on Jacksonville's second series. James Robinson fumbled on the team's next drive.

Patterson found a gaping hope up the middle for a 12-yard TD run. Patterson also had a 7-yard score on the game's opening possession. He finished with 108 yards rushing and 27 more receiving.

## Jets 21, Texans 14

In Houston, Zach Wilson threw for 145 yards and ran for a touchdown in his return from a sprained right knee, helping the Jets snap a three-game skid.

Wilson, the No. 2 overall draft pick in April who missed the last four games, was rusty early and threw an interception, but put the Jets (3-8) on top with a 4-yard scamper in the third quarter.

The Jets converted two fourth-down attempts on a drive that ended with a 37-yard field goal by Matt Ammendola that made it 21-14 with about 3½ minutes to go.

The Texans (2-9) hoped to build on an upset of Tennessee last week that ended an eight-game slide and looked good early. Tyrod Taylor threw two touchdown passes in the second quarter to give Houston 14-3 lead, but the Texans couldn't do anything offensively after that.

# NBA-leading Warriors beat Clippers, await showdown with Suns

**LOS ANGELES** (AP)—Stephen Curry is among the most dangerous players in the NBA. But an angry Curry proved to be more lethal.

The Golden State rstar took out his frustrations Sunday on the Los Angeles Clippers after being called for a technical foul with 9:08 remaining in the fourth quarter. He scored 11 of his 33 points after that as the Warriors extended their winning streak to eight with a 105-90 victory.

"It was just an accumulation of all types of weird stuff. All that led into where I thought I got a foul," said Curry, who also had a season-high six steals to go with five rebounds and six assists. "It definitely fired me and the team up. After that it was time to direct my energy into putting the ball in the basket."

Curry lost his temper when he didn't a draw a foul while driving to the basket after it appeared Clippers guard Terance Mann made contact. Coach Steve Kerr said he figured Curry was going to get a technical when he saw him go toward the official and pump his fist.

"That was as upset as I've seen him and that I have been in a long time. He clearly got fouled," Kerr said. "When he knows he got fouled on a play like that and he doesn't the call the competitor will come out in him and he will lose his mind a little bit. But it will spur him like it did in this instance."

Golden State had a 79-70 lead when Curry's outburst happened, but they would put it away afterward with a 21-7 run during a nearly five-minute span. Curry made three 3-pointers during the spurt, and applied the dagger shot with an off-balance triple from the right corner with 5:20 remaining.

Golden State Warriors guard Stephen Curry (30) disputes a foul call during the second half of an NBA basketball game against the Los Angeles Clippers in Los Angeles, Sunday, Nov. 28, 2021.
AP

Otto Porter Jr. added 18 points and 10 rebounds, and Jordan Poole scored 17 points for the Warriors. They improved their NBA-best record to 18-2 heading into a showdown Tuesday night in Phoenix against the streaking Suns—17-3 after winning 16 straight.

Paul George led Los Angeles with 30 points, and Eric Bledsoe and Marcus Morris added 13 apiece. The Clippers came into the game with wins in eight of their last 10 home games.

The Clippers played the Warriors tough in a 115-113 loss during the opening week of the season, but they could not keep pace this time in the second half. A big reason was a season-high 25 turnovers that led to 31 Golden State points.

"We've been talking about it for, I guess, the whole season -- just taking care of the basketball. If we turn the ball over against this team, they're gonna make you pay," coach Tyronn Lue said. "I guess out of our turnovers, 13, 14 were bad turnovers. We got to do a better job with our decision-making ... we're just not making the right play right now."

### Lakers 110, Pistons 106

In Los Angeles, LeBron James had 33 points, nine assists and no confrontations with Isaiah Stewart in the Los Angeles Lakers' 110-106 victory over the Detroit Pistons on Sunday night.

Russell Westbrook had 25 points and nine assists, and Anthony Davis added 24 points and 10 rebounds for the Lakers. They returned to .500 with their second win over Detroit in eight days.

Stewart was booed repeatedly and zealously by the Lakers' crowd, but he appeared to have no significant interactions with James after both players were ejected from the teams' meeting in Detroit a week earlier for an ugly altercation.

James was assessed a Flagrant-2 foul and ejected when he hit Stewart in the face while they jockeyed for rebounding position. An infuriated Stewart repeatedly attempted to charge at James in the aftermath, earning his own ejection. James served a one-game suspension and Stewart got a two-game ban.

Jerami Grant scored 32 points for Detroit. Stewart had five points and six rebounds in 27 minutes in the rematch.

### Bucks 118, Pacers 100

In Indianapolis, Giannis Antetokounmpo had 26 points and 13 rebounds and Milwaukee beat Indiana for its seventh straight victory.

Jrue Holiday scored 11 of his 23 points in the third quarter. Bobby Portis added 15 points, and Khris Middleton and Pat Connaughton each had 14,

Caris LeVert led the Pacers with a season-high 23 points.

### Celtics 109, Raptors 97

In Toronto, Marcus Smart scored 21 points, Al Horford had 17 points and 11 rebounds and Boston beat Toronto to snap a two-game losing streak.

Josh Richardson scored 18 of Boston's 32 bench points. Jaylen Brown added 16 points, and Grant Williams had 15 to help the Celtics improve to 11-10.

Fred VanVleet led Toronto with 27 points. The Raptors lost for the sixth time in eight games to fall to 9-12.

### Grizzlies 128, Kings 101

In Memphis, Tenn., Dillon Brooks scored 21 points, Desmond Bane added 18 and Memphis took advantage of Sacramento's poor shooting.

Memphis was playing its first game without scoring leader Ja Morant. He sprained his left knee Friday night in a loss to Atlanta.

Buddy Hield led the Kings with 14 points, but was 5 of 17 from the field.

# Thomas' late 3 helps US top Cuba 95-90 in Cup qualifying

**CHIHUAHUA, Mexico** (AP)—Isaiah Thomas made sure USA Basketball's road to the 2023 World Cup didn't begin with a major upset.

Thomas scored 21 points, including a sealing 3-pointer with 13.3 seconds left, and the Americans erased a seven-point deficit in the fourth quarter to beat Cuba 95-90 on Sunday in their World Cup qualifying opener.

"It's an honor and a privilege to put USA on your chest," the 32-year-old Thomas said. "So, anytime USA Basketball comes calling, I'm always going to be for it. We have a great group of guys, a great coaching staff and it was fun to be out there. It was a great game. It was a tough game for us."

The lead was just two after a Cuba basket by Jasiel Rivero with 34 seconds remaining. The U.S. didn't call a timeout, and Thomas kept the ball in his hands for the entirety of what became the biggest possession of the game for the Americans.

The two-time NBA All-Star—who averaged 29 points for the Boston Celtics in 2016-17 and spent a considerable amount of time battling injuries since—waited for a screen, used it and connected from near the top of the key for a 93-88 lead.

"We have prepared for those moments," U.S. coach Jim Boylen said. "We were organized. And he made a huge play."

Thomas—an NBA free agent with hopes of getting back into the league—last appeared on the national team in February, starting two games during qualifying for the AmeriCup. He led the team with 14 points per game in those contests, with the U.S. defeating the Bahamas and Mexico.

He was in the NBA briefly last season, averaging 7.7 points in three games with New Orleans.

"For me, personally, the ultimate goal is to get back in the NBA," Thomas said. "But I just love playing the game of basketball. So, obviously, at some point, if the NBA isn't an option I've got to look at options overseas. But I'm in love with the game. No matter where I'm playing, I have no pride whatsoever. I love competing and I love playing against the best players in the world."

Brian Bowen II and B.J. Johnson each scored 16 points for the U.S., while Justin Anderson added 10 for the Americans.

Rivero, who plays professionally in the top Spanish league, led all scorers with 34 points for Cuba. Karel Guzman scored 18 and Yoanki Mensia finished with 12 for Cuba.

"We give all the respect to Cuba," Thomas said. "They were a hell of a team. They made everything tough for us. They were talented."

Marcos Chacon's 3-pointer with 8:45 left gave Cuba an 80-73 lead. The Americans answered with a quick 9-0 run—Bowen and Thomas made 3-pointers to get the U.S. within one, then Thomas added a three-point play to cap the flurry and put his team back on top 82-80.

It was tied twice more from there. Johnson's 3-pointer pushed the U.S. edge to 88-84 with 2:46 left, and Thomas sealed it in the final moments.

"We stuck to the game plan and we got a win," Thomas said.

USA Basketball is using a roster composed primarily of G League players for qualifying, then added Thomas a few days before training camp began earlier this month in Houston. The U.S. is ranked No. 1 in the world by FIBA and is coming off the Olympic gold medal at the Tokyo Games, but still needs to qualify all over again for the World Cup—which is one of the paths teams can use toward qualifying for the 2024 Paris Olympics.

The U.S. concludes its trip to Mexico by playing the host nation in another qualifying game on Monday night. The two games in Mexico are the first of six first-round games for the U.S. in World Cup qualifying. The Americans are also scheduled to play Puerto Rico on Feb. 24, Mexico on Feb. 27, Puerto Rico on July 1 and Cuba again on July 4 in the opening qualifying round.

There are four teams in each of four qualifying groups out of the FIBA Americas region. The top three teams in each group move onto the second round of qualifying, which starts in August and runs through February 2023.

The World Cup runs from Aug. 25-Sept. 10, 2023, with the final in the Philippines and other games taking place in Japan and Indonesia.

# New country, new name for US citizen 'Enes Kanter Freedom'

**BOSTON** (AP)—Boston Celtics center Enes Kanter is changing his name to "Enes Kanter Freedom" to celebrate becoming a United States citizen.

Kanter's manager, Hank Fetic, told The Associated Press that Kanter will have his citizenship oath ceremony on Monday afternoon and at the same time will complete his legal name change.

The news was first reported by the Athletic.

Kanter, 29, is a native of Turkey who has been an outspoken critic of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and the Turkish government. Kanter has said his passport was revoked by his homeland in 2017.

The 2011 first-round draft pick has also taken to social media to support Tibetan independence and criticize Chinese treatment of the Uyghur people. During games, he has worn shoes decorated to say "Free Tibet" and argue for a boycott of the 2022 Beijing Olympics.

# Source: Twins, Buxton agree on 7-year, $100M contract

## TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

### NBA STANDINGS

**EASTERN CONFERENCE**

**Atlantic Division**

| | W | L | Pct | GB |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Brooklyn | 14 | 6 | .700 | – |
| New York | 11 | 9 | .550 | 3 |
| Boston | 11 | 10 | .524 | 3½ |
| Philadelphia | 10 | 10 | .500 | 4 |
| Toronto | 9 | 12 | .429 | 5½ |

**Southeast Division**

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Miami | 13 | 7 | .650 | – |
| Washington | 13 | 7 | .650 | – |
| Charlotte | 13 | 9 | .591 | 1 |
| Atlanta | 11 | 10 | .524 | 2½ |
| Orlando | 4 | 17 | .190 | 9½ |

**Central Division**

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Milwaukee | 13 | 8 | .619 | – |
| Chicago | 13 | 8 | .619 | – |
| Cleveland | 10 | 10 | .500 | 2½ |
| Indiana | 9 | 13 | .409 | 4½ |
| Detroit | 4 | 16 | .200 | 8½ |

**WESTERN CONFERENCE**

**Southwest Division**

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Dallas | 10 | 8 | .556 | – |
| Memphis | 10 | 10 | .500 | 1 |
| San Antonio | 5 | 13 | .278 | 5 |
| New Orleans | 5 | 17 | .227 | 7 |
| Houston | 3 | 16 | .158 | 7½ |

**Northwest Division**

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Utah | 13 | 7 | .650 | – |
| Portland | 10 | 10 | .500 | 3 |
| Minnesota | 10 | 10 | .500 | 3 |
| Denver | 9 | 10 | .474 | 3½ |
| Oklahoma City | 6 | 13 | .316 | 6½ |

**Pacific Division**

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Golden State | 18 | 2 | .900 | – |
| Phoenix | 17 | 3 | .850 | 1 |
| L.A. Clippers | 11 | 9 | .550 | 7 |
| L.A. Lakers | 11 | 11 | .500 | 8 |
| Sacramento | 8 | 13 | .381 | 10½ |

### NFL STANDINGS

**AMERICAN CONFERENCE**

**East**

| | W | L | T | Pct | PF | PA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| New England | 8 | 4 | 0 | .667 | 336 | 190 |
| Buffalo | 7 | 4 | 0 | .636 | 326 | 182 |
| Miami | 5 | 7 | 0 | .417 | 234 | 279 |
| N.Y. Jets | 3 | 8 | 0 | .273 | 199 | 334 |

**South**

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Tennessee | 8 | 4 | 0 | .667 | 304 | 290 |
| Indianapolis | 6 | 6 | 0 | .500 | 340 | 283 |
| Houston | 2 | 9 | 0 | .182 | 164 | 292 |
| Jacksonville | 2 | 9 | 0 | .182 | 173 | 283 |

**North**

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Baltimore | 8 | 3 | 0 | .727 | 263 | 240 |
| Cincinnati | 7 | 4 | 0 | .636 | 309 | 226 |
| Pittsburgh | 5 | 5 | 1 | .500 | 224 | 267 |
| Cleveland | 6 | 6 | 0 | .500 | 254 | 267 |

**West**

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Kansas City | 7 | 4 | 0 | .636 | 281 | 250 |
| Denver | 6 | 5 | 0 | .545 | 228 | 196 |
| L.A. Chargers | 6 | 5 | 0 | .545 | 273 | 293 |
| Las Vegas | 6 | 5 | 0 | .545 | 259 | 295 |

**NATIONAL CONFERENCE**

**East**

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Dallas | 7 | 4 | 0 | .636 | 326 | 250 |
| Philadelphia | 5 | 7 | 0 | .417 | 304 | 273 |
| Washington | 4 | 6 | 0 | .400 | 212 | 267 |
| N.Y. Giants | 4 | 7 | 0 | .364 | 202 | 253 |

**South**

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Tampa Bay | 8 | 3 | 0 | .727 | 347 | 253 |
| Atlanta | 5 | 6 | 0 | .455 | 199 | 302 |
| New Orleans | 5 | 6 | 0 | .455 | 257 | 249 |
| Carolina | 5 | 7 | 0 | .417 | 236 | 253 |

**North**

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Green Bay | 9 | 3 | 0 | .750 | 283 | 242 |
| Minnesota | 5 | 6 | 0 | .455 | 281 | 276 |
| Chicago | 4 | 7 | 0 | .364 | 179 | 254 |
| Detroit | 0 | 10 | 1 | .045 | 174 | 289 |

**West**

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Arizona | 9 | 2 | 0 | .818 | 310 | 202 |
| L.A. Rams | 7 | 4 | 0 | .636 | 299 | 263 |
| San Francisco | 6 | 5 | 0 | .545 | 280 | 248 |
| Seattle | 3 | 7 | 0 | .300 | 194 | 209 |

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

## BILLIE

*From Page 20*

ed the Mini ATV and ended up with 50 points with Kassidy Camacho coming second with 44 points.

In the Mini I, Harley Susulin sped her way to the finish line with 50 points with Brendon Derocher settling for runner-up honors with 44 points.

The rest of the results of MRA's Turkey Cross Race will be published in tomorrow's edition of *Saipan Tribune*.

**MINNEAPOLIS** (AP)—The Minnesota Twins and center fielder Byron Buxton agreed to a seven-year, $100 million contract Sunday, according to a person with knowledge of the deal.

The person spoke on condition of anonymity to The Associated Press because the contract was not yet finalized and pending a physical exam.

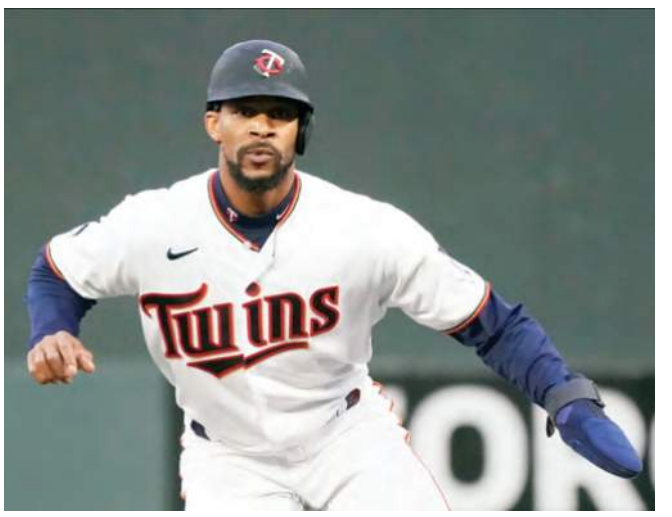
Buxton posted an aerial picture of Target Field on his Instagram account with a heart emoji for a caption. The fleet-footed, big-swinging Buxton was only under team control for one more season, raising the possibility of a trade to stem the blow of losing him as a free agent.

Despite some snags along the way in the negotiations, which were complicated by Buxton's injury history that has significantly limited his availability to the Twins, the 27-year-old never wanted to leave the organization he joined straight out of high school in rural Georgia as the second overall pick in the 2012 draft.

Buxton has played more than 92 games only once in his seven major league seasons. That was in 2017, when he played in 140 games and won a Gold Glove award.

The glimpses of his game-changing, worth-the-admission skills have grown broader over the last three years as he blossomed with the bat to match his long-superior work with the glove.

Last year, Buxton broke out at the plate in a big way with 23 doubles, 19 home runs and a .306 average in just 235 at-bats. He had a .647 slugging percentage that would have led the majors if he had a qualifying amount of plate appearances.



APMinnesota Twins' Byron Buxton takes a lead at first base against the Toronto Blue Jays in a baseball game, Thursday, Sept. 23, 2021, in Minneapolis. AP

Those bursts of dominance just kept getting interrupted, though, often due to bad luck. Buxton suffered a right hip strain in May. Then in mid-June, in just his third game after returning from the first injury, Buxton was hit by a pitch on the hand and broke his left pinky finger. He didn't return to major league action again until late August.

That was his 11th time on the injured list since his debut with the Twins in 2015 and the 15th time in 10 seasons as a pro.

Some of Buxton's past shoulder troubles stemmed from an all-out style of diving for balls and crashing against walls that the Twins have tried to curtail, but the broken finger—much like the concussion, wrist sprains and broken toe that came before—could hardly have been prevented.

"He is so tough, and he's willing to literally play with just about anything. He would have to not be able to walk for him to come out and say, 'I can't play.' The words never come out of his mouth. You would have to literally remove him from the field to get him off the field. That's just who he is as a guy and as a competitor," manager Rocco Baldelli said last summer.

# Franco signs $182-million, 11-year contract with Tampa Bay

**ST. PETERSBURG, Fla.** (AP)—Wander Franco and the Tampa Bay Rays have finalized an $182 million, 11-year contract that includes a club option for the 2033 season.

The shortstop's deal, which could be worth up to $223 million if the club option is exercised and incentives are reached, was announced Saturday.

"This is a great day for Wander and for the Rays, and is evidence of the mutual trust between Wander and our organization," Rays principal owner Stuart Sternberg said in a statement. "We are committed to fielding competitive teams year in and year out, and we all expect that Wander's presence and contributions will play a large part in maintaining our standard of excellence."

Tampa Bay won the AL East in 2021, but was eliminated by Boston in the ALDS.

The contract is the largest financial commitment to a player in the Rays' 24-year history. It's also the biggest deal in major league history for a player with less than a year of major league service time.

Franco is the fifth player with less than a year of big league experience to sign a long-term extension with the team. The others are third baseman Evan Longoria (2008), left-hander Matt Moore (2011), right-hander Chris Archer (2014) and second baseman Brandon Lowe (2019).

"The pace at which Wander has developed speaks to his potential," Rays President of Baseball Operations Erik Neander said in a statement. "We have seen him do special things on the field, particularly for a player that is only 20 years old. He's an exceptionally driven, budding superstar who can contribute to our success for a long time."

Franco made his major league debut June 22 and hit a three-run homer. He batted .288 with 18 doubles, five triples, seven homers and 39 RBIs in 70 games. He finished third in the American League Rookie of the Year voting.

Franco put together a 43-game on-base streak to tie Cincinnati's Frank Robinson (1956) for the longest in major league history among players under 21. He went 7 for 19 (.368) with two homers and four RBIs in four postseason games.

Franco would have been eligible for free agency after the 2027 season.

## RACE

*From Page 20*

singles play and 11-2 on the season in doubles play while suiting up for Pacific William Woods University.

Lee, playing for Georgia Tech, most recently went undefeated in both the singles and doubles competition in the Debbie Southern Furman Fall Classic in Greenville, S.C. Herras suits up for Metropolitan State University of Denver.

"The other six who will compete for the two remaining slots in the men's team are Ken Song, who was in the 2019 team, and also Tony Atalig, who lives in New York, who might come out to try out I'm not sure but he's interested. Here on Saipan we have Colin Ramsey, Bobby Cruz, Luther Lizama, and Morris Villanueva," said Race.

He said they will have a playoff among the four who are on island and then when the other two players—Song and Atalig—come from off-island they will have a final playoff to determine the last two members of the men's team.

Like the men's team, Race said included in the women's pool are off-island netters.

"We have Asia Raulerson who plays at Albany University. She was a freshman last year and played No. 1 in that Division II team. She's really interested and she really wants to try out and I hope she does. Then of course we have Tania Tan and Malika Miyawaki who played in the 2019 team and are playing club tennis at their schools."

On-island women's players that might get consideration are junior players Hye Jin Elliot and Serin Chung, according to Race.

"Hye Jin and Serin will also try out for the team and we might even have a surprise in there. It's possible we may have one other player."

The Pacific Mini Games 2022 Organizing Committee said nearly 1,900 athletes and officials from 21 island nations have so far confirmed their participation in the quadrennial sports event the CNMI is hosting next year from June 17 to 25. 2022.

For tennis, 128 players are so far booked. The venue for tennis are the American Memorial Park tennis courts in Garapan and the Pacific Islands Club Saipan tennis courts in San Antonio.

## NMI

*From Page 20*

and the NMI U18 automatically advanced to the semis and left four other teams to battle for the two remaining semis tickets.

Paire (2-0-3), which was ranked No. 4 going into the playoffs, will square off against No. 6 Old B Bank (0-0-5) on Dec. 1 for the third semis berth and the right to face TanHoldings in the Final Four. No. 3 Kanoa (3-0-2), on the other hand, will collide with Eleven Tiger (1-0-4) for the Dec. 2 playoff match with the winner challenging the NMI U18. The semis matches are set for Dec. 5.

Capitalizing on the short-handed Eleven Tiger, the NMI U18 secured win No. 4 early after scoring 10 goals in the first half of their one-sided match last week. Brian Lubao led the rout as he fired four goals. Reginald Pascual added three, while Akira Kadokura and Richard Steele chipped in two apiece.

Eleven Tiger, after suffering a bad beating from the NMI U18, returned to the pitch last Sunday and nosed out the Old B Bank, 5-4, to avoid a winless regular season.

It was a come-from-behind victory for Eleven Tiger, as the Old B Bank had the upper hand in the first half, 4-2, behind the goals of Suguru Takahashi. Bada Lee and Tanapon Unsa scored the two goals for Eleven Tiger in the first 45 minutes of the match and the latter delivered two more in the second half, including the go-ahead in the 59th minute to hand their team its first win. JC Piring also hit the board for Eleven Tiger in the second half, while the Old B Bank failed to counter to lose the lead and the chance to make it to the win column.

### HAFA ADAI CUP
### The One FC 5, Matansa 0

The One FC finished on top of Group A following a shutout win over Matansa last Friday.

Don Cabrera, Zhiqiang Lin, Seung Woo Lee, Zhipeng Lin, and Byung In Lee made one goal apiece to hand The One FC with a perfect 4-0-0 record in the regular season.

With its No. 1 rank in Group A, The One FC will take on Group B No. 4 finisher Kanoa (0-0-4) in the first round of the playoffs on Dec. 3.

### Chang Bai Hu 6, Bangladesh FC 1

Chang Bai Hu will be ranked No. 2 in Group A after downing Bangladesh FC last Sunday and earning a 3-0-1 mark.

Ming Guang Xu scored all but one of Chang Bai Hu's goal. The winning squad's other goal came from Ri Cheng Xian, while Al-Amin Fnu made the lone goal for Bangladesh FC.

Chang Bai will face the NMI U18 Women's National Team in the first round of the playoffs with their duel scheduled for Dec. 5, while Bangladesh FC (0-0-4) is done for the season.

### Bangladesh Youth 2, WNT U18 0

Bangladesh Youth matched Chang Bai Hu's 3-0-1 record after beating the WNT U18 last Friday.

Shakib Shakib and Mohamad Islam tallied the two goals for the Group B No. 2 rank Bangladesh Youth, which will take on Group A No. 3 team Shirley's FC in the playoff match on Dec. 5.

Meanwhile, Group B top finisher Saipan United (4-0-0) will meet Group A No. 4 rank Matansa in the other playoff game on Dec. 3.

**Fournette's 4 touchdowns lift Tampa Bay over Indianapolis** PAGE 17

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Sports

**Source: Twins, Buxton agree on 7-year, $100M contract** PAGE 19



# Billie reigns supreme in Power Puff class

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

At this stage might as well call her Blossom after Billie Pangelinan once again topped the Power Puff Girls Class of last Sunday's Turkey Cross Race at Cowtown Race Track in Marpi.

The 12-year-old Dandan Middle School student aboard her trusty 85cc Yamaha won both heats of Marianas Racing Association's Thanksgiving event to finish with a combined 50 points.

Coming in next to Pangelinan and completing the Power Puff cast of Bubbles and Buttercup were Nanako Celis and Shaniah Alvarez who wound up with 44 points and 40 points, respectively, to finish second and third.

Pangelinan said topping the women's division, which was named after the Cartoon Network late '90s hit, was just the icing on the cake.

"I had a really fun time on the track again, racing with the girls are always the best. I wasn't focused on winning, i just wanted to have fun. It felt really nice being back on the track with my girls Shaniah Alvarez and Nanako Celis!" she said.

Pangelinan, who practices every Sunday at Cowtown, said she got into into motocross because of her father, Glen, and brother Corry.

"Motocross was my father's thing back then too. We'd love watching the videos so we wanted to try it for ourselves," she said.

She also admitted that MRA's Turkey Cross was a nice distraction from news of rising COVID-19 cases on island.

"I'd like to thank Team Ericco for the support and all the help they've given me since I've joined them. I'd also wanna thank my family for supporting me during my races! I would love to dedicate the win to Team Ericco and my Gå'ga family," she said.

In the Peewee ATV Class, Brooklynn Susulin finished first after winning both heats and earning 50 points. She was followed by Angel Ray Camacho and Nakoa Torres with 44 points and 40 points, respectively.

Leon Galarsi topped the Peewee I with 50 points with Ryan Borja coming second with 44 points.

In the Peewee II Class, Keenan Togawa set the pace with his 50 points followed by Elleayah Cruz with 44 points.

Franchesca Yumul dominat-

See BILLIE on Page 19

Billie Pangelinan in action in the Power Puff Girls Class of last Sunday's Turkey Cross Race at Cowtown Race Track in Marpi.
LAO ZHANG

The NMI Boys U18 National Team's Jerald Aquino, right, tries to prevent TanHoldings Football Club's Joshua Waldo from stealing the ball during an earlier game in the MSL Cup of the Marianas Soccer League Fall Season 2021 at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koberville. The NMI U18 and TanHoldings are in the semifinals and waiting for their respective opponents.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

## NMI U18, TanHoldings move to semis

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The NMI Boys U18 National Team hammered Eleven Tiger, 15-0, to join TanHoldings Football Club in the semifinals round of the MSL Cup of the Marianas Soccer League Fall Season 2021.

The NMI U18 posted the lopsided victory last Wednesday at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koberville to finish the short regular season with a 4-0-1 win-draw-loss record for second place in the team standings behind the unbeaten TanHoldings (5-0-0). With their Top 2 finish in the regular season, TanHoldings

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# Race bares Mini Games tennis pool

### » 4 assured slots

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

National tennis coach Jeff Race said the core of the 2019 Apia, Samoa Pacific Mini Games will make up the CNMI National Tennis Team for next year's Northern Marianas Pacific Mini Games.

The CNMI Sports Hall of Fame inductee said 2019 Mini Games gold medalists Colin Sinclair, Robbie Schorr, and Carol Lee are guaranteed spots as well as Samoa veteran Isabel Herras.

Sinclar won the men's singles gold in Apia and together with Schorr and Ken Song bagged the men's team gold. He also partnered with Lee to win the mixed doubles gold.

NORTHERN MARIANAS PACIFIC MINI GAMES 2022

"We have at least six men trying out for the team. We have two spots in our men's team remaining and two spots are getting automatic spots—that's Colin Sinclair and Roby Schorr. It's pretty much the same thing with the women. Carol Lee and Isabel Herras will be our automatic players on the team. They're part of the core of our team from 2019," he said.

Sinclair recently led Pacific Oceania to promotion to Group II of the Davis Cup in 2022 after beating Syria in the finals of Group III in Amman, Jordan.

Schorr, meanwhile, was named to the AMC/HAAC Second-Team Singles and Second-Team Doubles after going 12-2 on the season in

See RACE on Page 19

Sinclair

Schorr

Lee

Herras